CHATS FROM A MINISTER'S LIBRARY

By

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CHATS FROM A MINISTER'S LIBRARY

MADE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To my brother

GEORGE SANBORN SMITH

a beloved father,
a devout churchman,
always willing to
bear the burdens
of others.

PREFACE

The title of this book is not original with the author, but who created it, I do not know. About 1942, I undertook, at the invitation of the Radio Department of the Moody Bible Institute, where I was a member of the faculty, a half-hour Saturday afternoon broadcast. Given full liberty as to the theme to be carried out, I decided to speak about books—old books, new books, current articles—to read sermons, to discuss texts in the light of the literature that has grown around them, etc. I think it was someone there in the Radio Department who created the title for this series which ran continuously for five years, "Chats from a Minister's Library." Out of this series I suppose came one hundred different manuscripts. Ten of these I have taken the liberty of using in this volume. I have left the manuscripts as they were prepared for the broadcasts, which will account for some of their time phrases. Others in the volume have been recently written, but they may all truly be included under the subject, *Chats from a Minister's Library*. If the volume should be received with even moderate enthusiasm, I plan to publish three or four similar volumes with the same title, perhaps a total series of five—time will tell.

It has been impossible for me not to be autobiographical here and there throughout the pages that follow. I trust this will in no way give offense, for I think nowhere have I boasted of anything, but simply given testimony to the joys of finding books, some of the treasures that have been found in them, and some of the strange experiences that have been mine in their acquisition. The title may sound almost monastic, so let me insist here at the very beginning that all the experi-

ences that I record, all the time spent with books, and all the bookishness that may mark these pages, have not been made possible by the quiet as of a country parish. For the last seven years of my life as an active pastor, I had the privilege of shepherding a congregation of seventeen hundred members. The following ten years I was a member of the faculty of the Moody Bible Institute, which is not a synonym for leisure; for the last three years, I have been a member of the faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena. Since 1935, it has been my privilege to edit the annual volume of *Peloubet's Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lesson.* Other books, six or seven of them, have appeared from time to time. Now all of this was done in a life necessarily crowded with work involved in the respective positions here named. The reason I am saying this is that other men might be encouraged to make use of what time they have, to widen their fields of interest, to engage systematically in extensive reading courses, to pursue the investigation of some great theme, or themes in the inexhaustible area of Christian truth and Biblical revelation. I have done nothing that any other man in the Christian ministry cannot do, providing two things: that he has a love for study, and that he has a passion for work, all by the grace of God.

Quite often in the pages of this volume I have given bibliographical details. I trust these will not prove dry or uninteresting. The number of pages in a book should normally indicate the comprehensiveness with which the particular subject is discussed, and of course dates make a great deal of difference—a book on the cross of Christ of 130 pages of 1850 by an unknown writer is an altogether different matter from a work of 500 pages by a German professor, translated into English, in the latter part of the 19th century; a short manual of Greek philosophy of 300 pages, with wide margins, which has never become standard, is an altogether

different volume from the great 700-page work by Windelband that went through numerous editions. I have given these bibliographical details simply that my readers may be guided in their choice of books. I wish to thank the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship for permission to reprint my article on the resurrection of Christ, a review of the late Professor Case's book on this subject, which appeared in *His,* January, 1949; also, the editor of *United Evangelical Action* for permission to reprint an article I wrote for them, "This Great Hour for the Student of the Word of God," March 15, 1949. The chapter on books that should be written is taken, for the most part, from our own *Fuller Library Bulletin,* January, 1949.

In a life which has been continually in contact with men and women, from my first little church in Ocean City, Maryland, where I began preaching in 1918, right down through the succeeding three pastorates, in the years at the Moody Bible Institute and now here with 190 college graduates as students in our seminary, as well as in Bible conferences throughout this country, I have found that reading and study, some acquaintance with books, and a fair ability to put one's hands on things when he wants them, have proved, both with people who have never finished high school and with university graduates, with laity and clergy, of the greatest value. As one year follows another and the first half-century of my life is in the past, I am finding the joys of reading and acquaintance with the great minds of the Christian church, and those works that help to interpret to us the glorious and inexhaustible truths of the oracles of God, to be even more and more refreshing, delightful, enlarging, indeed for me, exciting. The latter days of middle life for so many men prove a time of increasing and dangerous boredom. It will never be that when a man gives himself to the constant investigation of any area of divine truth.

One last word—and a simple one—the acquisition of books, a knowledge of the titles of books, and the construction and revision of bibliographies, all will mean almost nothing unless these books are opened, read, studied, meditated upon, and their truths allowed to weave themselves into the warp and woof of our lives. Begin today with something great; don't try to cover everything at once; understand what you read; use what you read; correct everything by the truth as it is in Christ; and thus day by day we may increasingly comprehend with the saints of all ages, who have left us their thoughts, their prayers, their sermons, and records of their lives, the love of God which passeth all knowledge, and so be the more thoroughly equipped for every work which God had called us to do.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply indebted to Charles Scribners and Sons of New York City for the privilege of quoting extensively from two books which they published some years ago by Dr. William Lyon Phelps, *Human Nature in the Bible,* and *Human Nature and the Gospel;* to the Oxford University Press for permission to quote extensively from a publication of theirs, *Autobiography With Letters,* by William Lyon Phelps; and to the University of Chicago for permission to quote extensively from *The Origins of Christian Supernaturalism* by Shirley Jackson Case.

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CHATS FROM A MINISTER'S LIBRARY

I

THIS GREAT HOUR FOR THE STUDENT OF GOD'S WORD

The man to whom events now occurring in different parts of our bewildered earth, and in different areas of human activity, mean most, or should mean most, is the man who has the Word of God in his hand and in his heart. He is the one who should know every day an excitement of heart and mind such as is possible for no other group of individuals. Probably in no period in our modern world, certainly at no period since the Reformation, have so many things been happening, and so rich a literature appearing, which relate directly to the Holy Scriptures as in these years since the Second World War. Though I have been a daily student of the Word of God now for thirty years, as minister, teacher, and writer, I have never in those three decades found the Scriptures so definitely related to world movements, so fresh and vital, so amazingly confirmed in many different ways, so absolutely necessary, and so rewarding, as in this hour.

I am still deeply moved by a statement I came upon recently in the latest and very significant volume by Arnold J. Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial,* regarding the present importance of the area of the ancient city of Babylon in relation to the resurrection of the great nations of the Far East from the tomb in which they have been slumbering for centuries. For a long time prophetic students have been emphasizing the importance of this particular spot on earth, some even going so far as to say that Babylon will be rebuilt. That point I am not arguing. But this is Toynbee's nothing-less-than-amazing statement:

"In an air age, the locus of the centre of gravity of human affairs may be determined not by physical but by human geography; not by the lay-out of oceans and seas, steppes and deserts, rivers and mountain ranges, passes and straits, but by the distribution of human numbers, energy, ability, skill and character. And, among these human factors, the weight of numbers can eventually come to count for more than its influence in the past . . . The peasant has not taken this awakening kindly. Even in the Americas he has contrived to remain much as he was in Mexico and the Andean republics, and he has struck new roots on virgin soil in the Province of Quebec. Yet the process of his awakening has been gathering momentum; the French Revolution carried it on to the Continent; the Russian Revolution has propagated it from coast to coast; and though today there are still some fifteen hundred million not yet awakened peasants—about three-quarters of the living generation of mankind—in India, China, Indo-China, Indonesia, Dar-al-Islam, and Eastern Europe, their awakening is now only a matter of time, and when it has been accomplished, numbers will begin to tell. Their gravitational pull may then draw the centre-point of human affairs away from the Ultima Thule among the Isles of the Sea to some locus approximately equidistant from the western pole of the world's population in Europe and North America and its eastern pole in China and India, and this would indicate a site in the neighbourhood of Babylon, on the ancient portage across the isthmus between the Continent and its peninsulas of Arabia and Africa."

Even more strategic, by far, has become the city of Jerusalem in these last two years. For many centuries, since the fall of the Latin kingdom, and the end of the crusades, Jerusalem has only been a place where tourists visit, the object of pilgrimages, and a center of archaeological expeditions. Today, on the one hand, the Pope of Rome issues an en-

cyclical pleading with the world to internationalize the holy city, and, on the other hand, indeed, in the very week in which I am writing, the first Israeli constituent Assembly is being held within the boundaries of the modern city Jerusalem, where thousands and thousands of Jews are now living. I cannot understand the comparative indifference and lethargy of so many Christians today in the face of this truly miraculous appearance of the government of Israel, something the world has not seen for over two thousand years! Our New Testament opens not with an Israeli government, but with kings of Judaea and procurators of Galilee who were under the dominion of Rome. Today a Jew is president of the Israeli government; and more than that, the Jews are centering their attention upon this city, which is receiving more space in our daily newspapers and periodicals week by week than any other great city of the world, even than Berlin with all of its troubles, or Paris with its culture, or London, the hub of a great empire. Jerusalem in our Bible has a great future portrayed for it. Even our Lord said that when that city was no longer being trodden down of the Gentiles, the times of the Gentiles was nearly ended. On Tuesday, February 14, 1949, Dr. Weizmann, when inaugurated as the first president of the Israeli government, in addition to frequently speaking of the prophets and the Old Testament Scriptures, made a most remarkable quotation from the Old Testament, a passage which probably most of us had forgotten was in the Scripture. I am not going to tell my readers who uttered the words, but this is the sentence that Weizmann quoted: "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: Jehovah shall rule over you" (Judges 8:23). In the *New York Times* for February 18, 1949 (p. 15) is a long communication from Jerusalem dated February 17, headed, "Jerusalem Sector Sought by Shertok."

On a Sunday morning in February, 1948, two members of

the Greek Orthodox Convent of St. Mark in Jerusalem brought to the American School of Oriental Research, in the northern part of the city, some ancient, brittle, carefully-wrapped scrolls (documents rolled up as books were rolled in ancient times) which when examined were discovered to include the most ancient copy of any book of the Old Testament in Hebrew known in the world today, the so-called Isaiah Scroll, which Dr. Albright of Johns Hopkins has said is "the greatest single manuscript discovery of modern times." Articles in *The Biblical Archaeologist* agree in declaring that these scrolls, found in a cave down near the Dead Sea, will occupy the attention of our best Semitic scholars for the next ten years. I would say here that if any young man is contemplating going into the ministry, or is now studying in a theological seminary, he should give himself day and night to these Semitic languages, for such discoveries are going to have an enormous bearing upon Biblical problems and Biblical exegesis in the next decade.

In this same field of investigation, may I commend to all my readers who are interested in the most fundamental aspects of Biblical investigation, a book published by the Oxford University Press for the British Academy in 1947, *The Cairo Geniza,* by Dr. Paul E. Kahle, professor emeritus of the University of Bonn. This is a careful, scholarly summary of the amazing material found in the ancient synagogue of old Cairo, where the Jews were accustomed to "put away all sorts of printed and written material which they no longer used, not that they might be kept there as in archives, but in order that they might stay there undisturbed for a certain time, fearing that such material on which the name of God might be written might be profaned by improper use." This enormous collection was never carefully examined until the opening of our century. One collection alone of material purchased from the storeroom of this synagogue embraced 1,582 manu-

scripts of the Hebrew Bible and the Masora, written on parchment and 752 written on paper; in addition to these, belonging to other collections, were 5,000 Hebrew manuscripts, 1,243 Arabic manuscripts and 343 non-Biblical Hebrew manuscripts. What a rich field to work in!

In the *New York Times* for February 15, 1949, is a remarkable article about some fragments of Hebrew manuscripts brought over to this country by Dr. Eleazar Lipa Sukenik, director of the Museum of Jewish Antiquities of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, which he says date back to the time of the Maccabees, which would be at least 160 B.C., the article reminding us that just within the last year the earliest Hebrew manuscripts known to exist today dated no earlier than the ninth century A.D.

In contemporary literature, there is probably no one factor quite so significant for the Christian and the study of the Word of God as the saturation of contemporary theological and secular writings with the vocabulary of apocalyptic, and with warnings concerning an impending world crisis. In the summer of 1947, the eighth meeting of the Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion, was held at the American Philosophical Society. The papers of this notable conference have now appeared in a volume published by Harper and Brothers, *Learning and World Peace*. The address that surprised me most was "The Task of Philosophy in an Age of Crisis," by Dr. Paul A. Schilpp of the Department of Philosophy of Northwestern University. Now Professor Schilpp is an antisupernaturalist. Students of his have told me that some of his utterances in the classroom are nothing less than shocking. Yet probably no professor in any department of philosophy has spoken at a conference of contemporary scholars with language so sobering, and almost frightening, as the opening sentences spoken by Professor Schilpp at this conference:

"For a number of years we have, almost incessantly, been told that 'humanity stands at the crossroads.' Aside from the fact that we have all grown tired of this old cliché, the slogan is no longer true. Humanity today stands before the abyss. How soon we may be hurled into this abyss—as the result of the inventive power of our own creative mind—no one actually knows. But at least among people who know the facts, the fear is growing that the time is very short indeed; so short, in fact, that we can no longer speak in terms of generations or even of decades, but—probably—only in years below two digit figures. That prospect in itself is ghastly enough. What seems to me, however, to make it infinitely worse is the fact that leaders of church, science, and the university insist, in general, upon continuing to act as if nothing had happened."

Prophetic students have often been rebuked and ridiculed by the world for thinking that the coming of the Lord is nigh, but Professor Schilpp goes even further and says we have less than ten years before a world crisis falls upon us!

The lectures delivered at the opening session of UNESCO at the Sorbonne University in the summer of 1948 have recently been issued by Allan Wingate of London, with the title, *Reflections on Our Age.* I was nothing less than amazed to discover that the opening address in the section on culture, by the distinguished French scholar, Emmanuel Mounier, is entitled "Reflections on an Apocalyptic Age." The most astonishing thing is that Professor Mounier is not speaking in general terms of apocalyptic, but talking about the book of Revelation, and that before the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, the first president of which was Julian Huxley, who has for years scorned the significance of the Word of God! Mounier's address opens with the following sentence from the book of Revelation, "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of

the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed." This is followed by a report of the dropping of the atomic bomb, as recorded in a newspaper of 1946, and the two are made to speak of the same phenomena. Later in his address Mounier says:

"The Apocalypse sheds a very different light. At no time and in no way does it anathematize the history of mankind or of civilization; on the contrary, it shows all nations and all civilizations coming together through their very mistakes, towards some great, mysterious destiny. The parable of the wheat and the tares thus remains beyond doubt the truest symbol of the Christian view of history. A rank harvest does, it is true, develop through the ages, to make barren mankind's utopias; that is the part of Christian Pessimism. But beyond these sad fields the kingdom of God arises perpetually, with slow, irresistible force."

It should not be forgotten that only one volume of all the literature of the ancient world is receiving such consideration in different quarters of the globe; only one work of the whole ancient world arouses such universal interest. Men are not going back to Vergil, or Cicero, or to Aristotle, or even to Plato for light on this critical hour, and guidance in an atomic age. None of these great men foresaw in any way a world crisis, but the Word of God foresaw it, and the conditions prevailing on earth, and the powerful currents now sweeping mankind on to Armageddon. All this should make us to rejoice that God has given us such light for dark hours, and then send us back to study anew, with deeper earnestness and a holier life than ever these inspired pages. Indeed, not even the great historians of our modern world before the dawn of this century foresaw such an hour as we now behold.

There are three reasons why Christian ministers should devote themselves more passionately than ever before to the study and interpretation of the Word of God. First, because

it is our only hope in an age of deepening materialism, when the greater mass of mankind in the western world are without God, and the greater part of mankind in the Orient in another generation or two will be without any religion at all. Professor Loenker in his most important chapter, "The Nature of Secularism," in a book that every minister should secure, *The Christian Faith and Secularism,* recently published by Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, says,

"Secularism is no longer as it was a hundred years ago an intellectual revolt against theological domination. It has become the supporting atmosphere of our culture. Secularism marks the contemporary culture, not merely of nominally Christian lands, but of every region to which the modern emphasis upon men's ability to achieve his salvation through his own efforts has been extended."

Our Lord said, "The words that I speak unto you are spirit, and are life," and the only hope for man today to be delivered from the encroachments and soul-suffocation of materialism is through the truth of God and His redemption as manifested to men in Jesus Christ His own Son, recorded for us in the Holy Scriptures. The cry of the Psalmist must be the cry of mankind today, "In thy Word do I hope."

The second reason we should give ourselves anew to the ministry of the Word is that we are entering upon an age which will be marked by a deeper ignorance of the Word of God than any age at least since the Reformation. The ultimate consequences of the verdict of the Supreme Court of our land in eliminating the Bible from public schools must inevitably be in the direction of paganism, a preparation for a deeper entrenchment of materialistic philosophy in our country than ever. This ignorance of the Scriptures will not only be confined to the next generation of our American youth, but is already characterizing too many ecclesiastical councils now being held around the world. We live in a time

when great crowds of ecclesiastics leap into airplanes and rush hither and thither for this kind of conference and that kind of congress, but where in these meetings is there open, frank, well-informed debate about the great themes of the Word of God and the Holy Scriptures themselves? Great sums of money are voted for this ecclesiastical purpose and that. We hear a lot of talk about the church needing to be united, and of the necessity for the church to speak on matters of property, labor, capitalism, etc., but what about the voice of the Word of God?

I have heard that when a certain Biblical text came up for some discussion at the WCC in Amsterdam, no Bible could be found among all the churchmen gathered together that day until a newspaper reporter produced a Bible he was carrying. If this is true, we are making great decisions without consulting the Word of God. This is not the way problems were faced either by the church fathers or by the great reformers.

In the third place, we need to re-examine the Scriptures because they alone speak to us of a world crisis. I have mentioned this above, and need not enlarge upon this point here. How grateful we ought to be that God has not called *us* to a life-study of Dante, or Cicero, or Seneca, or even Aristotle, important as their writings are, but that He has called us to a study of that Word which, inspired of God, has foreseen the end from the beginning, and has a message of hope for men as that end approaches.

I have emphasized in this chapter the importance of reading the literature of our day, and keeping abreast of the best that is being written relating to the stupendous events and deep currents of thought and ecclesiastical movements that are more and more convulsing the earth, but I would like to end with one note of exhortation, if not of warning. Luke begins his record of the ministry of John the Baptist with these

words: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea, and Trachonitis and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness" (3:1, 2). It would be difficult to bring together in any one time of history, in any one area, a more notorious, besotted array of contemporary rulers than is particularized in this opening introductory passage. Yet, in the midst of such wickedness, wickedness in Rome and among the Roman rulers in Palestine, graft and duplicity and falsehood, in the ecclesiastical courts of Jerusalem, "the word of God came unto John in the wilderness." We need often to be in a solitary place, alone, for hearkening to the Word of God in an hour like this. We need a shut door, a bowed heart, a listening ear, a believing soul, a mood of expectancy, as we open again these pages, which contain for us, and for those who will hear, the truth regarding the origin of the world, which is so troubling our contemporary scientists, the great redemptive work accomplished for us in Christ Jesus the center of all history, and the end of this age with its violence, anarchy, world dictatorship, and increasing blasphemy which will be terminated with the coming again of Him who will bring peace on this earth, power over every evil force, joy and abundance of life to the nations that will then be on earth, and a body of resurrection glory and eternal life to all who are redeemed by His precious blood. For ministers of the Word particularly, this is the supreme hour to put away everything trivial, to demand of ourselves a more careful use of time, a severer discipline of mind, a determination that secondary things will not rule where primary things ought only to be enthroned, that we may be found when the Lord comes as the "workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."

2

RELATION OF A VERSE IN GENESIS TO THE EARLY USE OF CHLOROFORM

In the middle of the 19th century, the physician that had the largest practice in Scotland was Sir James Young Simpson (1811–1870). Simpson was made Senior President of the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh at the astonishing age of twenty-four. Before he was thirty years old, he was appointed to the chair of Midwifery in that city, and when only thirty-six years of age, he was appointed one of Her Majesty's physicians for Scotland. By the time he was fifty, he had become a member of nearly every medical society on both sides of the Atlantic, had been given the degree of D.C.L. by Oxford, and was the first physician practicing in Scotland to receive a baronetcy. When he passed away, before reaching his sixtieth year, he was given a great public funeral in Edinburgh, and a bust of him was placed in Westminster Abbey.

While still a young surgeon, Simpson was horrified at the awful tortures involved in surgery. Of course, there were no anesthetics. Amputations were only possible by strapping the patient to a table and cutting through tissue and bone; some tumors, cancer and many other ills, and of course other things we operate for today just could not be touched then. One shudders to think of at least five thousand years of operating without any anesthetic at all. To discover some way in which patients about to be operated upon could be put to sleep, Simpson periodically gathered together in his home a small group of physicians, generally on Monday evenings. At these gatherings various chemicals, crystals, powders, etc.,

were placed over a burning brazier, while the doctors would inhale the rising fumes. Week after week of such experiments passed without any appreciable results (it is a wonder that some chemical did not kill them). They had almost given up hope when one evening one of the guests in Simpson's home said he had received from an apothecary in Paris a crystal called chloroform. It was brought in and some of it put over this brazier. The doctors had not been inhaling these fumes very long before one of them slipped from his chair under the table, then another and another. When they woke up, they knew that the object of their search had been found. It was a turning point in surgery and modern medicine. Humanity entered a door into a new day. This was on November 4, 1847.

When later experiments in the hospital proved the efficiency of chloroform, Simpson was attacked for using what some called an immoral, some a dangerous, and some a God-resisting method for meeting one of the great problems of life, pain. Sir James had had a deep Christian experience and had a profound knowledge of, and love for the Word of God. He was not a little disturbed over one charge, namely, that pain was ordained of God and that any artificial means used for the alleviation of pain must be considered to be outside of God's will. He had nowhere to turn for guidance in this crisis except to the Word of God itself and was determined to find, from what he considered to be a divine revelation, if the volume spoke on the question, and whether such a method of alleviating pain as he was now capable of using could be considered an act of disobedience to God's will, and resistance to His holy purposes. He had no more than turned the first page of his Bible when he came upon these words: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of the ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof, and the rib which the Lord God had

taken from the man made he a woman and brought her unto the man" (Gen. 2:21, 22). This was the answer to Simpson's question; of that he had no doubt whatever. Being a true scholar, and a lover of research, Simpson carefully investigated the actual language of this text, especially the meaning of the Hebrew word here translated *deep sleep,* and wrote an article on the subject for a journal of medicine of Edinburgh. It was entitled, "Answer to the Religious Objections Advanced Against the Employment of Anesthetic Agents in Midwifery and Surgery." This was finished within six weeks after his discovery of the effects of chloroform. (It will be found reprinted in the second volume of the *Works of Sir James Young Simpson,* entitled "Anesthesia, Hospitalism, Hermaphroditism," etc., Edinburgh, 1871, pp. 42–55.) As far as I know, this is the first time that the actual words of this story have been presented in any volume published in America. To me it is one of the most fascinating anecdotes connected with the influence of the Scriptures of any generation. The following is all taken from this article, which I had the privilege of reading a few years ago in the Medical Library of Northwestern University, Chicago.

Simpson begins by stating the charge against him: "I am informed that in another medical school my conduct in introducing and advocating the superinduction of anesthesia in labor has been publicly denounced *ex cathedra* as an attempt to contravene the arrangement and decrees of Providence, hence reprehensible and heretical . . ." After quoting the curse pronounced upon Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:16–18), Simpson continues: "If it is sinful to try to counteract the effects of this part of it, referring to child-bearing women, it is sinful to try to counteract the other parts of it regarding the state of the ground . . . The agriculturalist in pulling up the thorns and thistles . . . is never looked upon as erring and sinful in doing so." He then continues with another argu-

ment: "If some physicians hold that they feel conscientiously constrained not to relieve the agonies of a woman in child birth because it was ordained she should bring forth in sorrow, then they ought to feel conscientiously constrained on the very same grounds not to use their professional skill and art to prevent man from dying."

The surgeon-scholar now proceeds to investigate the Hebrew word translated sorrow, *etzebh,* which is derived from the root *atzabh,* meaning to labor or toil, showing that in the other places where it occurs it does not mean physical pain, namely, Proverbs 14:23; 5:10; 15:1; 10:22; Psalms 127:2; Jer. 22:28. "The great characteristic of human parturition is the vastly greater amount of muscular effort, toil or labor required for its accomplishment. The state of anesthesia does not withdraw or abolish that muscular effort, toil or labor; for if so it would then stop and arrest entirely the act of parturition itself. But it removes the physical pain and agony . . . it leaves the labor itself entire."

Whether we agree with the next statement of Sir James is not the point. It shows, however, that the great surgeon was well taught in Biblical theology and in no way would detract any glory from the Lord Jesus. He says, "Certainly under the Christian dispensation the moral *necessity* of undergoing such anguish has ceased and terminated. Those who believe otherwise must believe, in contradiction to the whole spirit and testimony of revealed truth, that the death and sacrifice of Christ was not as it is everywhere declared to be, an all-sufficient sacrifice for all the sins and crimes of man," a statement which he supports from Matthew Henry's commentary on the third chapter of Genesis.

He then comes directly to the question of anesthetic in its relation to sleep: "Those who urge on a kind of religious ground that an artificial or anesthetic state of unconsciousness should not be induced merely to save frail humanity

from the miseries and tortures of bodily pain forget that we have the greatest of all examples set before us for following out this very principle of practice in Genesis 2:21. In this remarkable verse the whole process of a surgical operation is briefly detailed, but the passage is principally striking as affording evidence of our Creator himself using means to save poor human nature from the unnecessary endurance of physical pain." Simpson here quotes Calvin on this verse: "It is to be noted that Adam had been plunged in a sleep so profound that he felt no pain; and further that neither had the rupture been violent or was any want perceived of the lost rib, because God so filled up the vacuity with flesh that his strength remained unimpaired, only the hardness of bone was removed."

Let us now return to the concluding argument of our learned Christian surgeon: "The profundity of the sleep as expressed in the Hebrew is also worthy of note, for the noun *tardenah* signifies according to all the best Hebrew scholars the deepest form of induced slumber. In the early and very literal Greek translation which Aquila made of the Bible, he uses the word *kataphora,* a term which Hippocrates, Galen, Aetius, and other Greek physicians used as implying that state of insensibility and total unconsciousness which in modern medical language we express by 'coma' and 'lethargy.' Gesenius translates the Hebrew word with the Latin word *sopor* . . . The Hebrew term for common sleep is *shenah.* We may always rest fully and perfectly assured that whatever is true on point of fact or humane and merciful in point of practice, will find no condemnation in the Word of God."

3

THE LATEST IMPORTANT ATTACK UPON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

In the last few years, the attack upon the supernaturalistic elements of the Christian faith has acquired such a fierce intensity that we even have famous universities where not one member of the faculty would dare confess that he believes in their great foundation truths of the Christian faith. Supernaturalism is the battleground for Christianity, and it will continue to be to the end of the age. John Dewey stated his side of it in his Yale lectures some years ago entitled *The Common Faith.* He insisted that not until Christianity got rid of its supernaturalistic claims would mankind be delivered from the last chains which were binding it. Then, and only then, would men be truly free.

Most antichristian books simply assume the nonexistence of the supernatural; if they touch the area at all, they generally argue for naturalism rather than against supernaturalism. Now and then, however, someone does dare to investigate the origins of the supernaturalistic elements of Christianity, for this is a problem that, since the beginning of the preaching of the apostles, has baffled anti-supernaturalists and enemies of the Christian faith. And it continues to baffle them.

The latest attempt to storm this citadel is by a mature scholar who has enjoyed a notable career in theological education in this country, Dr. Shirley Jackson Case. His book is *The Origin of Christian Supernaturalism* published by the University of Chicago Press in 1946. Dr. Case speaks with the authority of a lifetime of study and teaching, with considerable learning, and after having examined this subject at

one time or another over a period of forty years. After receiving his Doctor of Philosophy degree from Yale in 1904, he became Professor of History and Philosophy of Religion in Bates College, Maine, in 1906. He entered the University of Chicago as Assistant Professor of New Testament Interpretation in 1908. He was Professor of Early Christianity in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago for the last twenty-two years, Chairman of the Department of Church History since 1923, and Dean of the Divinity School from 1933 to 1938. He was for some years the managing editor of the *American Journal of Theology,* for twelve years the editor of the *Journal of Religion,* and after 1940 editor of *Religion in the Making.*

This book is of special interest when one realizes that it represents the ideas of a man who was for five recent years dean of one of our largest and most important theological seminaries. In addition, he was a mature scholar, who for years had tenaciously denied the supernatural elements of our faith. Here he sets forth why he does not believe in the supernaturalism of Christianity, how he thinks the idea came into Christianity, and why he thinks faith in it should be abandoned. If the arguments were sound, the book would be very disturbing. Many people are having their faith disturbed today by unsound argument. It is well, therefore, to give careful examination to such a volume as this.

The matter of supernaturalism seems to have interested Dr. Case for a long time. In 1929 he wrote *Experience with the Supernatural in Early Christian Times.* This volume and others like it apparently did not succeed in accomplishing what had been hoped, for Dr. Case confesses in the first sentence of the preface of his new book, "In recent years there has been a vigorous revival of interest in supernaturalism." He concludes the preface with these words, "The pertinence of the subject today seemed to demand a review of the whole

field with more specific reference to the problem of origins."

We shall look most particularly at the author's attempt to explain the rise of faith in the Resurrection, since he agrees that that is the most important supernatural element of Christianity. As long ago as 1909, Dr. Case wrote "The Resurrection Faith of the First Disciples" in the *American Journal of Theology* (April, 1909, Vol. 13) frankly admitting, "The first Christians confidently believed that Jesus really died, was really buried, and actually rose from the dead and appeared to his disciples. The testimony of Paul alone is sufficient to convince us beyond any reasonable doubt that this was a commonly accepted opinion in his day—an opinion at that time supported by the highest authority imaginable, the eye-witnesses themselves."

In trying to show how this resurrection story got into the Gospel records, one has two possible lines of approach. One would be to show it to be impossible to believe in the Gospel accounts, pointing out contradictions, attributing the faith to visions, etc. The other method would be to discover what might be called parallels to these stories in the myths of Greece and Rome, and then to show that these stories became lodged in minds of the early Christians and were finally incorporated into the New Testament. Strangely enough, Professor Case nowhere in this volume examines the Gospel records themselves.

Let us begin with Professor Case's account of the attitude of the Jews to the Resurrection. It is strange that such a scholar should say that the Jews had developed "a dependable machinery for securing the regular operation of supernatural power on behalf of mankind." By this machinery he means the system of worship in the temple at Jerusalem, a priestly class set apart by God, divinely appointed sacrifices, religious seasons of the year, weekly gatherings in the synagogue, and finding the will of God in the Scriptures—a machinery so con-

stituted that "the entire life of the faithful Jew was supernaturally directed by means of the duly constituted rites of his religion" (p. 2). Of course these acts of worship are not supernatural in the same sense as the miraculous manifestations of Christ: His supernatural birth, His supernatural miracles, His supernatural resurrection, His supernatural ascension. But after claiming that the Jews of Christ's day had a machinery for supernatural operations, he on the other hand states, "The Christian preachers vainly sought to win any large following from among their Jewish contemporaries who were willing to believe that Jesus had been seen alive again after His crucifixion . . . That way of thinking was anathema to orthodox Judaism" (pp. 27, 91). But at the beginning of Acts we read, ". . . the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). Was not the whole Jerusalem church made up almost entirely of Jews? Did not the Apostles Paul and Peter minister first to the Jews? And hundreds of them, it would seem from the New Testament, were saved.

If the Jews did not receive the truth of Christ's resurrection, how did it happen that the resurrection was believed, and tenaciously? How was it that the Apostle Paul continually insisted on this supernatural fact before the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, and cried out, "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question" (Acts 23:6)? Speaking before Felix at Caesarea he said that his hope was the same as that of all Jews: "that there shall be a resurrection . . . of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15). The emphatic thing that Festus wrote to King Agrippa was that Paul insisted that one Jesus had been dead but was now alive (Acts 25:19). Paul asked Agrippa, "Why should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead?" and then in that powerful apologetic he dwells more on the fact of and evidence for the Resur-

rection than on any other aspect of the Christian faith, even declaring it was prophesied in the Old Testament (Acts 26: 6–8, 22–23). The preaching of this truth established the Christian faith. This is what shook the world; this is what won great multitudes of Jews to Christianity; this really is what brought about the conversion of St. Paul. On the Damascus road he saw the ascended Lord and he knew God had raised Him from the dead, and therefore he declared Him to be God's only begotten Son. Obviously, then, one cannot explain away the Resurrection by saying the Jews didn't believe it. Many of them did. Indeed, it is the very thing to which those who became Christians tenaciously clung, the miracle which they spoke of incessantly. Where did they get this conviction? From historical fact.

Now what about the Gentiles? Where did they get the story of the Resurrection and why did they believe it? If it did not arise from pagan myths, Professor Case says, at least it was believed because similar stories were floating about and people were used to believing in apparitions—ghosts coming up to walk in the earth, haunted houses, visitors from heaven, etc. Some of the stories to which Professor Case refers do not seem to relate to the problem of the resurrection of Christ at all. Among these are the Greek and Roman myths concerning visitors from heaven. These have no relationship to the Gospel records of our Lord because these deities from heaven did not live on earth, make a living, grow weary, sleep, eat, or die. The Greek gods were never really seen at all. But people knew Jesus was on earth. No *history* of Greece incorporates the councils of the gods on Mt. Olympus, but no history of Eurasia can be written without giving some place to one Jesus of Nazareth. He did walk on this earth, and He did live the life of a man. Professor Case admits this; in fact, years ago he wrote an entire book, *The Historicity of Jesus*.

But, Dr. Case says, the Gentile world believed in appari-

tions. He summarizes briefly a story from Pliny the Younger, but I think we ought to consult the entire narrative as it rests today in Book 7, Letter 27, to Sura:

"There was at Athens a large and roomy house, which had a bad name, so that no one could live there. In the dead of the night a noise, resembling the clashing of iron was frequently heard, which, if you listened more attentively, sounded like the rattling of chains, distant at first, but approaching nearer by degrees; immediately afterwards a spectre appeared in the form of an old man, of extremely emaciated and squalid appearance, with a long beard and disheveled hair, rattling the chains on his feet and hands. The distressed occupants meanwhile passed their wakeful nights under the most dreadful terrors imaginable. This broke their rest, ruined their health, and brought on distempers, so that their terror grew upon them, and death ensued. Even in the daytime, though the spirit did not appear, yet the impression remained so strong upon their imaginations that it still seemed before their eyes, and kept them in perpetual alarm. Consequently the house was at length deserted, as being deemed absolutely uninhabitable; so that it was now entirely abandoned to the ghost. However, in hopes that some tenant might be found who was ignorant of this very alarming circumstance, a bill was put up, giving notice that it was to be either let or sold.

"It happened that Athenodorus the philosopher came to Athens at this time, and reading the bill, enquired the price. The extraordinary cheapness raised his suspicion; nevertheless, when he heard the whole story, he was so far from being discouraged that he was more strongly inclined to hire it, and, in short, actually did so. When it grew towards evening, he ordered a couch to be prepared for him in the front part of the house, and calling for a light, together with his pencils and tablets, directed all his people to retire. But that his mind

might not, for want of employment, be open to the vain terrors of imaginary noises and spirits, he applied himself to writing with the utmost attention. The first part of the night passed in entire silence, as usual; at length a clanking of iron and rattling of chains was heard; however, he neither lifted up his eyes nor laid down his pen, but in order to keep calm and collected tried to pass the sounds off to himself as something else. The noise increased and advanced nearer, till it seemed at the door, and at last in the chamber. He looked up, saw and recognized the ghost exactly as it had been described to him: it stood before him, beckoning with the finger, like a person who calls another. Athenodorus in reply made a sign with his hand that it should wait a little, and threw his eyes again upon his papers; the ghost then rattled its chains over the head of the philosopher, who looked up upon this, and seeing it beckoning, as before, immediately arose and, light in hand, followed it. The ghost slowly stalked along, as if encumbered with its chains, and turning into the area of the house, suddenly vanished.

"Athenodorus, being thus deserted, made a mark with some grass and leaves on the spot where the spirit left him. The next day he gave information to the magistrates, and advised them to order that spot to be dug up. This was accordingly done, and the skeleton of a man in chains was found there; for the body, having lain a considerable time in the ground, was putrefied and mouldered away from the fetters. The bones being collected together were publicly buried, and thus after the ghost was appeased by the proper ceremonies, the house was haunted no more. This story I believe upon the credit of another; what I am going to mention, I give you upon my own."

Of course, this is very far from being like the resurrection story. There is no appearance for conversation, personal contact, divine commission, instruction in the Scriptures, and

eating, such as we have in the resurrection stories of our Lord. What can account for the difference? Furthermore, Pliny's writings were exercising a far greater influence in his generation than were the writings of John. Within a few centuries this story of Pliny's was almost forgotten, but the story of Jesus' resurrection spread throughout the world and created a vast literature. But from such a basis, Dr. Case goes on: "It is not improbable that Gentile belief in apparitions ought to be taken more largely into account as a means of explaining how the friends of Jesus themselves had found it possible to attach transforming significance in their own lives to this experience . . . The pious and educated Jew might successfully guard against these insidious influences from without, but the common man was less well protected" (p. 27). The truth is that the early disciples, gathered in the upper room on Easter night, actually thought they had seen a ghost. They said so. For the moment at least they believed in ghosts and apparitions. Well, many people do today. We must not forget that even such a brilliant scientist as Sir Oliver Lodge was often deceived in spiritualistic seances.

But Jesus stood before these frightened disciples and told them that He was not a spirit, and that He had flesh and bones which no spirit has, and invited them to touch Him and see. This person Jesus walked along a highway, which a ghost never does, talked for an hour or two as He opened the Scriptures, which is something that never happens in an apparition. One morning by the Sea of Galilee He even prepared breakfast for the disciples, which I dare say no ghost has ever done. It must have been something more than an apparition that appeared in Jerusalem, because after Jesus had been condemned and crucified and His death had been rejoiced over by multitudes, Simon Peter—who himself could not at first believe in the Resurrection—could stand up in that same city before a multitude and preach the resurrection of Christ.

It was more than an apparition that three thousand people in that city that day believed on. Apparitions may have some significance for those who think they see them, but they have no value in preaching to a skeptical, unbelieving multitude.

Professor Case says that "The fancy of every Greek youth had been nourished on the imagery of Homer," and the story of the appearance of the spirit of Patroclus to Achilles had made a deep impression on the Greek imagination. "In popular thinking," he says, "ghosts from the infernal regions were constantly breaking through to the upper world to walk once more on earth . . . That ghosts should appear was taken for granted. Persons accustomed to this imagery would find no difficulty, and perhaps much satisfaction, in picturing Jesus appearing after death to his distracted friend Peter, or to his own brother James, or to the faithful women whose devotion and affection sought to express itself by carrying gifts to his tomb" (pp. 29, 30).

One wonders who these "persons accustomed to this imagery" were who began to "picture" Jesus appearing as a ghost after death. Does he mean that the Jews, Matthew and Mark, were accustomed to thinking in terms of Greek mythology and that they dared to mold their Gospels in the forms of Homeric myths? Does he think that the Apostle Peter, a rugged fisherman, drew these "pictures" out of his imagination? Does he think that doubting Thomas was convinced finally of the physical resurrection of Jesus one week after the event had taken place, by someone drawing pretty pictures? Was it pictures, dreams, and fantasies, sweet little reminiscences of something that never took place, that turned the world upside-down and made men go singing to the stake and arena? If there was a group of people on earth in the first century that had absolutely no traffic with the Greek and Roman deities, it was these Jews of Palestine. In fact, Dr. Case himself says "the Jews of Palestine at the beginning

of the present era were singularly free from indulgence in magic and other gross displays of superstition that often marked the life of their Gentile neighbors" (pp. 5, 6). Then why would they accept fanciful stories of the resurrection of one Jesus? Would people who had no use for myths and lived in the very city where that event was said to have taken place be likely to believe in the resurrection story if it were a myth?

The Greek and Roman myths are known today. We study them and trace their influence over literature; we examine closely the vocabulary of Homer and marvel at the richness of his pages. But there is no cult of Hercules today; no one today is worshipping Zeus or Apollo or Jupiter. The Greek gods are dead. But there are millions who believe with all their souls and minds in the resurrection of this person Jesus —and they are not all stupid, illiterate people. Many are professors in universities and outstanding scholars. In every generation great intellects, as well as others, have publicly confessed their faith in the resurrection of Christ. Scientists stand up and confess it today. An acknowledged scholar, C. S. Lewis can write from Oxford and confess his faith in the Resurrection.

Now how does it happen that confidence in the Greek myths disappeared long ago, but absolute confidence in the reality of the resurrection of Christ abides in the blazing light of modern science, under the scalpel of severest criticism? No one has to write a book today to disprove the historical reality of Achilles.

Dr. Case devotes a chapter to the subject of "The Function of Heroic Saviors," an old subject with anti-supernaturalists. He reminds us that in the Mediterranean world some outstanding men, generally subsequent to their death, were deified. He mentions especially the deification of Julius Caesar, and argues that, inasmuch as men were accustomed to

deifying outstanding characters in a similar manner, some people in Palestine got together and determined to deify Jesus who, though good and kind, had been unjustly treated and condemned to death. Of course, if Jesus were only a man, we would expect the Caesar cult to flourish farther and remain longer than a cult in which Jesus was deified. Caesar was the ruler of the Roman Empire, one of the greatest rulers the earth has ever known; Jesus was a humble carpenter in obscure little Nazareth. Caesar had proved himself one of the supreme military geniuses of all time; Jesus walked only the roads of Palestine and conquered only individuals. To follow Caesar meant glory, rich spoil, and political office. To follow Jesus meant to be ostracized from the ecclesiastical circles of Palestine; it meant persecution and hardship and death. Caesar gathered around him the great of that day; Pompey, Cicero, Brutus, Antony, etc. Jesus gathered around him a tax collector and some Galilean fishermen. Caesar died spectacularly stabbed by Brutus, a death that Caesar's friends determined immediately to revenge, a death that shook the Roman Empire. Jesus died in shame on a cross between two thieves, with a mob throwing insults at Him, and even God forsaking Him.

The Caesar cult began about seventy-five years before the death of our Lord. It had a good start. How does it happen that within two centuries the Caesar cult was dead, but thousands and thousands of men and women of every walk of life had been delivered from the bondage of sin and the fear of death by the name of Jesus Christ? How does it happen that the Caesar cult as well as the other ancient Roman and Greek religions are not found today, but the "Christian cult" goes on? This problem needs facing, and only a reasonable explanation will be accepted in a day like ours.

The reason millions now worship Christ while no one worships Caesar is that some things were true of Christ that

were never true of Caesar, and men are looking for these things in their Saviour and God. Caesar was a sinner. The Lord Jesus Christ was absolutely holy; to this men agree, whatever their convictions regarding His deity. He never had to confess His sins, and God Himself declared that in Him He was wholly pleased. The disciples who knew Him best confess that in Him was no sin. None who fought with Caesar or worked with him in the Roman Senate could ever say that of him. Then, too, the words of the Lord have proved infinitely more precious through the centuries than Caesar's. I can well remember in our sophomore year in high school reading Caesar's *Commentaries,* and how some students reconstructed the bridge which Caesar described in a famous passage and marvelled at the carefulness of the description. But when we got through Caesar's *Commentaries* we were not better boys, in our souls. There was nothing in Caesar's words to take to our hearts. There was no power to change our inner nature. There were no lines of hope regarding everlasting life. There was no assurance of God's love. There was no comfort for broken men, no light for those approaching the darkness of death. If Caesar had said it, time would have proved false the statement "My words shall never pass away." But they are Jesus' words and time is proving them true.

Only once in the last thirty years have I heard Caesar's *Commentaries* quoted on a public occasion. Remembering his boyhood days, King George V of England was able to recall what Caesar had said about the great bravery of the Belgians. But every day, all over the world, millions of people are reading and remembering the words of Jesus. Thousands of young men are giving their lives to their study. On the Lord's Day multitudes of people in every tribe and nation are edified, convicted, cleansed, comforted, lifted, and strengthened by sermons preached from these words. Yes,

there are *reasons* for the fading of the cult of Caesar and for the abidingness of the Christian religion.

The body or coffin of Caesar could be seen for years after his death by devoted followers and the visitors to Rome, but no man ever saw the dead body of Jesus after the morning of that first Easter. They saw Him crucified, they saw the empty tomb, they heard Him speak, they watched Him break bread, they heard His voice, they recognized Him, and as they looked upon Him, they cried, "My Lord and my God." These facts separate the cult of Caesar from the Christian faith. God had raised Him and declared Him thus to be His Son. This is not a myth lifted out of Homer; this is an event carved into the history of the first century. This is not something no mortal eyes could behold, transacted in the cloudy heights of Mount Olympus; this is something that fishermen, women of Jerusalem, doubting men, skeptical men, saddened men, bewildered men, holy men, men of the truth—all of them saw, heard, handled, and knew. "This is the gospel," said the mighty Saul of Tarsus, now Paul the Apostle, "that Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He rose again from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures."

The purpose of Dr. Case's book is to account naturalistically for the origins of our Christian faith in order to emphasize his belief that the supernatural parts of Christ's life were only myths to be added to the other myths of the Mediterranean world. But not only was there an enormous difference between Jesus and the gods, but how does it happen that these Hebrew people, who loathed the whole pantheon of Greek and Roman deities, should put the life of our Lord into their mold? And how does it happen that this story was accepted in the first century, the skeptical age which ridiculed the Greek gods? As Dr. Case says, "The followers of Plato . . . hesitated to accept popular notions about ap-

paritions" (p. 31). "The Stoics, at least in their more strenuous moods, did not take kindly to the notion of specific apparitions of deity" (p. 36). "Jewish reserve with reference to apparitions of God was shared by the earliest Christians" (p. 34). Dr. Case also refers to the third book of Cicero, *De Natura Deorum,* beginning especially with chapter 15. Let one turn to this and see the ridicule cast upon the Greek gods, and the sneering attitude of the Romans, and then let them frankly face this question: with all this skepticism in the world, how did this story of the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth gain such acceptance? This is a question of history and is not to be answered by a reference to the gods of Homer who were already rejected.

On the last page of his book, Professor Case recommends something to modern men. He reminds us that Paul's epistles were always of two parts, and that usually "nearly half the space was given up to practical admonitions regarding ideals one should cherish and practice." Then he adds, "The character of the ideals that dominated one's life was the fundamental factor in religion." He advises that we give up the apologetic, the doctrine, which he says is now outworn, and keep the type of life there presented. Dr. Case is right in saying there were always two parts of Paul's epistles, but he fails to point out that the first half is always doctrinal, setting forth the person of Jesus Christ as the Son of God; the ethics follow. Take away the foundation, the superstructure collapses. It is impossible to live the life which the New Testament sets before men without the Christ who creates that life. It is the risen Christ living in us that makes the Christ-life possible.

I wonder, too, why Professor Case sought to keep the "ideal" that is there set up. He doesn't say we should keep the kind of life revealed in Homer's *Iliad,* or in Plutarch's *Lives,* or in Seneca's philosophy, or in Caesar's *Commentaries.* Is

there then a superiority in the New Testament type of life? Professor Case would seem to say there is. We believe there is. How did this superiority arise? Did it arise by people believing they saw the risen Lord when they had only been deceived by a ghost?

When I closed the book and thought back over the career of the author, and recalled his early articles on this question of Christ's resurrection, I could not help asking myself a question or two. Why did Professor Case come back to this subject of the resurrection of Christ, after forty years of writing, teaching, thinking, studying? I know one reason—because men still believe in it, and this disturbed Professor Case, as it disturbs many others who do not want to believe. I know another reason—all that Professor Case has ever written, and all that others have ever written, against the resurrection has not been sufficient to dislodge this foundation of our faith. The very fact that these scholars must devote years of painstaking toil to building their battering-rams and bringing them up against the citadel of the Christian faith, and there to wear themselves out pounding against these eternal truths, only to come to old age and find that the citadel still stands, and that they must force themselves to strike once more against its foundations—all this is only a confirmation of the great assertion of the Apostle—we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. If this is all that a mature scholarship in the middle of the twentieth century, in this critcal scientific day, has to offer to the world to attempt to persuade men that Christ is not the Son of God, that the Resurrection is only a myth, and the Christian faith must be abandoned, then the Christian faith is revealed once again to be safe, secure, unassailable, the truth by which Christ can make us free.

4

WHERE TO FIND THE BEST PRINTED SERMONS ON ANY GIVEN TEXT

By "finding" the best sermons on any printed text, I do not mean where to find certain books one may be looking for in a theological library or in a bookstore, but where to find what sermons have been printed on any one text in which one has become interested. Whether the books are difficult to discover or easily accessible is not the question faced in this discussion. In other words, I would like to discuss (and as far as I know this is the first article in English that has been written on this subject with any comprehensiveness) where to discover all the available important sermons on any one text. This means an examination of the best indexes to sermonic literature, as well as some other volumes which will be mentioned subsequently.

The first index to Scripture texts, as far as I know, was published in Oxford in 1637, a work of 156 pages, carrying the title, *A Nomenclature of Such Tracts and Sermons as Have Been Printed or Translated into English Upon Any Place of Scripture.* The title of the second edition of this work (Oxford, 1642) carries the information that these books were "To Be Had in the Most Famous and Publique Library of Sir Thomas Bodley in Oxford." Nearly all the books referred to in this work have their Bodleian references, the arrangement being in the order of the books of the Bible. Because so many of these works are now simply impossible to secure, it is not necessary to enlarge upon the contents of this volume. I am purposely omitting a discussion of a small work of 96

pages, *An Index to the Sermons published since the Restoration,* etc., London, 1739.

In 1753 a more important work was issued, compiled by Sampson Letsome, the Vicar of Thame, Oxfordshire, called *The Preacher's Assistant,* a work of some five hundred pages. The subtitle will indicate its contents: "A Series of the Texts of All the Sermons and Discourses Preached Upon and Published Since the Restoration to the Present Time." Part II. "An Historical Register of All the Authors in the Series, Containing a Succinct View of Their Several Works." Thirty years later, John Cooke, an English bookseller, issued a volume modeled after Letsome's work, as he admitted in the title, in two volumes, pp. 487 and 425 respectively. This was by far the most important work of its kind until the publication of Darling's monumental volume, which we will refer to later.

Toward the middle of the 19th century, John Forster, a clergyman of the Church of England, published in London, 1840, a volume of 200 pages, *The Churchman's Guide; a Copious Index of Sermons and other Works, by Eminent Church of England Divines, digested and arranged according to their subjects, and brought down to the present day.* The greatest volume ever produced in this field appeared in London in 1859, with the title, *Cyclopedia Bibliographica, A Library Manual of Theological and General Literature* by James Darling. The first volume contains an index to subjects, the second volume an index to authors. The first volume contains 1899 columns, and being inter-leaved, actually consists of a few over 1900 pages, including the index. The *Dictionary of National Biography* says this work was, next to Watt and Lowndes, "the most important bibliographical work ever produced in England." The thoroughness with which this work was done may be gathered from Darling's own words: "The greater part of the present work is the result

of a careful inspection, often leaf by leaf, of the books contained in the Metropolitan Library, founded by the compiler in January, 1840, in order to supply a want greatly felt for an institution, where, for a small annual subscription, members could obtain at their own residence the use of books of a superior order, ancient as well as modern, especially in Theology, and in the various languages . . . Other books, not yet in the Library, are added, in order that it may have that completeness which may render it as a useful guide in all libraries . . . The name of each author is accompanied by a short, but as comprehensive as possible, biographical and characteristic notice, so far as can be ascertained from authentic sources. The notice of each author is followed by the full titles of all or the most important of his works, with critical notices where necessary. The variations of editions are specified, and those that are considered the best are indicated. No tables of contents have been followed, but a careful examination has been made in order to exhibit the most essential topics of every book, and give a full analytical view of the subjects on which each author has written. The books contained in the collected publications of early and middle-age writers, are enumerated at length. The plan embraces objects which have never yet been attempted on a complete scale in any bibliographical work." As an indication of the exhaustiveness of this volume, we might take, e.g., the book of Deuteronomy. Darling first lists the principal commentaries on Deuteronomy, beginning with Origen and coming down to a work by John Cumming, London, 1856. There then follows sixteen columns of sermonic references, probably numbering 500 sermons, and discourses on the book of Deuteronomy down to the middle of the 19th century, some in Latin, a few in French, most of them in English. We will come back to Darling when we have finished discussing the subsequent works of this nature.

In 1878 John Hancock Pettingell, an American Congregational theologian issued a unique work called *The Homiletical Index,* a volume of 316 pages, which contains 20,000 different Scripture texts, and sermons and discourses which have been developed from them. In some ways Pettingell's work is a perfect model, though to have carried out this scheme to completion, say, in a work like Darling's would have multiplied the volume by three. Pettingell quotes in full the Scripture verse in the left-hand column, and then, immediately opposite the verse, not only gives the volume in which a sermon on that text may be found, and the author, but he actually gives the title of the sermon, which in many cases is all one needs for the suggestion of a good thought.

In 1900 there appeared that twelve-volume work known as the *Sermon Bible.* It is more than a bibliography; it attempts to give concise abridgments of thousands of sermons on various texts, arranged in Scriptural order, with an accompanying bibliography covering the particular verse expounded and many other verses that are not expounded. For instance, under Genesis 15:5, 6, there is a one-page abbreviated sermon by Bishop McGee, originally published in the *Penny Pulpit,* references to four other sermons on the same text, and then, without any additional sermonic material, references to sermons on Genesis 15:7–21; 15:11; 15:12, 17; ch. 15, 16; 16; 16:3, 4 and 16:7, etc. The next page of condensation is on Genesis 16:13. This scheme is carried through the Scriptures, about six thousand pages. I rarely use the work, except for its bibliographies, but I am sure even some of the condensed sermons have their value, though, frankly, I do not care for abbreviated sermons.

From 1908 through 1914 a series of volumes appeared, edited by the greatest dictionary editor in the field of religious literature of modern times, Dr. James Hastings, called *The Great Texts of the Bible.* This handled the material a little

differently; e.g., in the volume on Isaiah there are 25 sermons, on Isaiah 1:3, 17, 18; 2:4; 6:1–8; 53:3, 5, 6; 55:1, 7, 8, etc. About 18 pages are assigned to each text. Some of the material has been rewritten, and some of it is quoted. There is considerable poetry scattered throughout these volumes. To me, the most important aspect of this work is its bibliographies; e.g., for Isaiah 6:1–8, called "The Making of a Missionary," there are references to sermons from 25 different volumes of sermonic literature, sermons appearing in 6 different sermonic periodicals, and references to articles in three Biblical dictionaries.

In 1910 and 1911 two massive volumes were issued edited by Sir William Robertson Nicoll and Jane T. Stoddart, with the co-operation of Professor James Moffatt, entitled *The Expositor's Dictionary of Texts.* The subtitle exactly describes the contents: "Containing Outlines, Expositions and Illustrations of Bible Texts with Full References to the Best Homiletic Literature." This work, measuring $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ inches, contains 2100 pages of double columns, that is, 4200 columns of material, which I would judge amounts to about 1,200,000 words. There are some real virtues about this book; one is that many sermons are here given with sufficient fullness to convey the principal thoughts of the one who preached the sermon, in his own language; another is that titles are given for much of the material, and some of these titles are exceedingly suggestive. In the bibliographical material, to me by far the most important single aspect is the fact that the 60 volumes of Spurgeon's great *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit,* probably containing 3,000 sermons, are here for the first time indexed, so one may tell at once whether Mr. Spurgeon ever printed a sermon on any one text he may be considering. Also, for the most part, Maclaren's *Expositions of Holy Scripture* are here indexed. It is a great piece of work, and its literary references are choice,

as of course they would be with three such editors as brought together this material. On the other hand, there are some amazing weaknesses here. This material was gathered just at the beginning of the 20th century, when all over the world the sun was shining in undiminished brightness, when everyone thought that the world was about to enter upon the long-awaited millennium, when the watchword was progress, and the justification for such was evolution, when the Hague Tribunal and the international peace conferences were expected to bring us a universal and permanent peace. Somehow the darker truths of the Word of God, if we may call them such, revealing the blackness of the human heart, the inevitability of judgment, etc., are here strangely passed over. Even many of the great passages proclaiming the meaning of the blood of Christ are almost ignored, though Sir William Robertson Nicoll himself often preached on the subject. Thus, e.g., John 1:29, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," is given less than a column of consideration, while such a verse as Revelation 2:17, "I will give him a white stone" is given 2½ columns. John 13:34 is assigned 15 lines, in spite of the fact it is one of the greatest utterances that ever came from the lips of our Lord.

About 1926 the *Speaker's Bible* Office in Aberdeen began the publication of what will certainly prove to be, when finished, the most comprehensive work of its kind in the entire field of homiletics; about 30 volumes have already appeared, and if the entire Bible is covered with the same fullness, probably 20 more volumes will yet be published. The most exhaustive treatment of any one part of the Scriptures relates to the Gospel of Luke, to which four volumes are devoted, 1476 pages of double-column. The total number of words is just about the same as the number of words in the two huge volumes of the *Expositor's Dictionary of Texts;* or,

in other words, for the Gospel of Luke, the *Speaker's Bible* gives as much material as the *Expositor's Dictionary of Texts* gives for the entire Bible! (We must remember, however, that no other book of the Bible is dealt with quite as exhaustively as Luke's Gospel here.) There is nothing to compare with this in the English language. Many texts are assigned four and five columns, while some have ten and fifteen columns devoted to their treatment. The bibliographies are stupendous. The men who have worked out these have almost exhausted the good sermonic material of the last eighty years; I say *almost,* for some things are missing, a subject to which we must come back again shortly. These, then, are the major indexes to homiletical literature in our language. We shall now examine these works, testing their value and shortcomings, if they have any, by taking a few interesting texts and discovering what these separate volumes may turn up for us in each case.

Before comparing the virtues and shortcomings of these various volumes, I must mention a volume in my library the like of which I have never seen elsewhere. For many years, as everyone knows, the editor of *Peloubet's Select Notes,* and at the same time editor of the *Christian Endeavor World,* was Dr. Amos R. Wells, who had an enormous library in his home in Auburndale, Massachusetts. Dr. Wells secured a lined notebook, $5\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ inches, of 300 pages, in which he indexed 1715 volumes of sermons. I understand he had not finished indexing all the sermon volumes in his library, but here are references in one notebook to probably 35,000 sermons. The system is exceedingly simple. At the end of the notebook in double columns he lists these books, giving each of them a numeral. Let me name the first five: 1. Robinson: Studies in New Testament. 2. Bonar: Light. 3. Dale: James. 4. Talmadge: Sixth. 5. Young: Unfamiliar. He knew, of course, what each of these brief titles referred

to. In the body of the notebook he listed every chapter in the Bible; sometimes one entire page was given to a chapter, as John 21, and sometimes as many as ten chapters appeared on one page, e.g., Psalms 133–142. Underneath the chapter number would be the verses on which sermons had been printed. He entered these verses as he indexed the volumes. Let me illustrate: Under II Corinthians 7 he has the following notation: $1\ \begin{matrix}455 & 1700\\ 100 & 23\end{matrix}$. Of course, there are many verses in the Scriptures for which there were no sermons in his 1700 volumes. Sometimes a verse has one sermon, sometimes twenty sermons. Now let us look at these numbers. I turn to the back of the book and find that *455* refers to Scofield: *New Life,* the lower numeral telling me that the sermon begins on page 100. Volume 1700 is Knight: *Full Allegiance,* and the sermon on this text begins on page 23.

We are now ready to test these various volumes with some scattered verses. One of the greatest statements in the earlier part of the Bible, relating to that precious doctrine, vicarious atonement, is Exodus 12:13: "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." I find no reference to this whatever, strange to say, in the *Speaker's Bible* for Exodus. There is no reference in Mr. Wells' index, and no *material* in the *Expositor's Dictionary of Texts.* However, there are three references, all to Spurgeon: *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit,* Vol. V, 228; Vol. 21, 1251; and Spurgeon's *Twelve Sermons on the Atonement,* 25. In the *Sermon Bible* there is three-fourths of a page of material, and a reference to the *Clergyman's Magazine,* Vol. 14, p. 22, a work very rarely come upon. Darling gives two references to books that may not even be in this country. G. N. Lawson: *Sermons,* 85; and P. Bland, *Sermons,* 92.

Recently a good friend of mine gave a remarkable message in our seminary chapel on II Chronicles 7:14: "If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." And what do these indexes tell us of this text? There is not one single reference to this great verse in the *Expositor's Dictionary of Texts* (hereafter referred to as EDT), nor in the *Sermon Bible* (referred to hereafter as SB), nor in Mr. Wells' great index. It is here that the great index of Darling shows up in its superiority—there are nine sermons mentioned here, some of them going back to 1660.

Years ago, I read a great sermon by Dr. Jowett on a text that most of us would just pass by, Isaiah 7:18: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria." I find there is no reference to this in SB, nor in EDT, but the *Speaker's Bible* does give the reference to Jowett: *Whole Armour of God,* 189, and also a reference to a sermon by Jowett in the *British Congregationalist* for October, 1915, 325, which I assume would be the same sermon. Darling gives no sermon on this text, but a reference to a commentary on Isaiah.

On Isaiah 1:18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," EDT gives two columns of material, four references to Spurgeon's sermons, and three to other preachers. The SB gives, in additon, a reference to Spurgeon's *My Sermon Notes, Ecclesiastes to Malachi,* 213; C. J. Vaughan: *Fifty Sermons,* 1874, 33; R. W. Evans: *Parochial Sermons,* Vol. II, 193; and S. Cox: *Expositions,* 3rd Series, 427. I discover that my index from the pen of Mr. Wells gives more literature, some older, some more recent; e.g., Kelman: *Things Eternal,* 250; Kirk:

Consuming Fire, 1; Jefferson: *Things Fundamental,* 29; Matheson: *Hope,* 1; Farrar: *Chats with Children,* 27; Wishart: *Angel,* 48; Matthews: *Gospel Sword Thrust,* 39. I am giving this material exactly as it is in my Wells' book, without author's initials and full titles.

A portion of Scripture which has produced through the years a vast amount of literature, and is now assuming new significance, is the description of the final invasion of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38 and 39, two chapters totaling 51 verses. But the sermon material on this is pitiful. SB has no material; EDT gives a quotation from Carlyle's *Heroes* which is not important, and then for 38:11, 12, gives a reference to J. N. Neale: *Sermons on the Prophets,* Vol. II, 44; and for 39:25, C. A. Marshall in the *Christian World Pulpit,* Vol. 43, 1892, 394. Mr. Wells for 38:11 gives Nicoll: *Sunday Evening,* 271. Darling here has a reference to a dissertation in the great French commentary of Calmet, Vol. VI, 360; on 39.8, a sermon by H. W. Sullivan; and on 39:29, a sermon by the great preacher John Howe in the 5th volume of his *Works.* There is one superb reference here to a discussion by E. Lillingston in his Bloomsbury Lectures, Vol. IV, 319, entitled, *The Last Confederacy of Gentiles Against Israel.* I am trying to find this volume in this country, but have thus far failed. This is all one could possibly find in sermonic material for these two chapters (we will come back to the subject a little later under another heading).

To emphasize a point made in an earlier part of this article, that some of the most sober but important passages of Scripture were given almost no consideration at the turn of this century, we might consider John 8:44: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and

the father thereof." This is by far the most important single statement ever uttered by the Lord Jesus concerning our great enemy and His, Satan. Surely the most important statement ever uttered by the Son of God regarding Satan is certainly something that needs to be considered, and preached, and taught. Well, in ETD there is a reference to only one sermon, T. F. Crosse: *Sermons, 2nd Series,* 168, and some references to *The Expositor,* which are not sermonic. In SB there is a reference to E. Paxton Hood: *Preacher's Lantern,* Vol. 2, 285, and in Mr. Wells' book one reference, T. G. Selby: *Commonwealth of the Redeemer,* 155. There are two references in Darling, one very important—S. Clarke: *Sermons,* Vol. 8, 1, and a sermon by the great preacher C. J. Vaughan, "Personality of the Tempter," in his *Sermons,* 1851, 1. *The Speaker's Bible* has the same reference as the Wells' index, and no other, though for verse 36 it gives twelve references, and for verse 46 there are fourteen references.

In spite of all these helps to assist one in discovering the best printed material on any passage of Scripture, much that should be seen and read is overlooked for one reason or another. Thus, e.g., though there are at least thirty different sermons on Matthew 18:35, becoming as little children, in the volumes I have referred to here, I think the most important and concise paragraphs ever written on this passage are not to be found in these sermons—but in that wonderful article "Children" by no less a scholar than Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield, in the first volume of the *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels,* edited by James Hastings. Another illustration would be II Timothy 2:2: "And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Of all the passages in the Scriptures that justify the establishment of, and attendance upon a Bible institute or a theological seminary, this is the one passage; yet there is not a single ref-

erence to this in the bibliography in the *Speaker's Bible,* none in the *Expositor's Dictionary of Texts,* and only one in the *Sermon Bible,* a sermon by A. P. Stanley in the *Christian World Pulpit,* Vol. 11, 200. However, the most important interpretation of this great verse in our language is to be found not in a volume of sermons, but in the glorious pages of Professor Alfred Plummer in his volume on the Pastoral Epistles in the *Expositor's Bible.*

This brings us to another aspect of our study. In addition to all these volumes indexing sermons, there are four or five series of volumes, most of them not indexed, which would prove of tremendous help to all ministers, and would yield material frequently relating to themes ordinarily not unfolded in the usual sermonic literature. First of all, there is the wonderfully rich series of Joseph Parker in twenty-seven volumes, *The People's Bible.* Spurn any depreciating verdict on these volumes, for they are brilliant, suggestive, true to the Scriptures, filled with gems and nuggets, bristling with ideas, and many texts others were afraid of, Parker wrestles with. Then there are the thousands upon thousands of pages in the *Expositor's Bible.* One of the most beautiful chapters on Isaac and Rebekah ever written is in Marcus Dods' chapter in his volume on the book of Genesis in this series. No more profound exposition of Christ's coming into the world, and the world knowing Him not, can be found than in the first volume of John in the *Expositor's Bible.* Then, not as rich as these, but very evangelical, with good illustrations, are the twenty volumes by the late W. B. Riley: *The Bible of the Expositor and Evangelist.* There is also the long series of works, twenty-one volumes, by that true saint of Cambridge, Charles Simeon, called *Horae Homileticae.*

Some great preachers are, for reasons I could never give, almost ignored in the important homiletical indexes here enumerated. I see almost no references to the brilliant ser-

mons of T. DeWitt Talmadge, very few references to the sermons of Theodore Cuyler, and, strangest of all, there are almost no references to the sermons of one of the greatest divines of all times, Robert South, Canon of Christ Church, Oxford. Thus, e.g., on Romans 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," a sermon thirty-four pages long, is one of the richest expositions of this text in our language. Why South's sermons are not indexed, I would not know. The great passage in Ephesians 6:10–20, on putting on the whole armour of God, has elicited a vast literature, some of it of a very excellent quality, yet the greatest exposition that has ever been done is almost wholly passed by since Darling indexed it a century ago. (Darling gives five editions down to 1837, the earliest being 1658.) I know it is a rare work, but it should be included—*The Christian in Complete Armour, or a Treatise on the Saint's War with the Devil,* by William Gurnall. My volume is the one revised and corrected by Dr. John Campbell, a work of 825 pages on these eleven verses. And do not say one does not have time to read this. What does one use his time for? What better use of time could one possibly make than reading some of the most spiritual, devotional literature that has ever proceeded from the pen of an uninspired man?

I do not see references these days to the sermons of Richard Baxter (1615–1691), Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), William Law (1686–1761), and, above all, Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680). These giants of Biblical interpretation are not to be found in our modern lists of sermons, which contain so much that is strictly unimportant, meaning the waste of money in buying them, and a waste of time in reading them.

One of the greatest collections of sermons in the English language has not been used by anyone indexing homiletical literature, probably because it is so difficult to come upon. I refer to the *Westminster Pulpit,* fifty sermons a year by

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, bound annually from 1906–1917. I doubt if there are five complete sets in America, well known as Dr. Morgan was in this country. In thirty years of turning the pages of second-hand theological book catalogues, I have never seen a set for sale; in fact, I only once in all these years saw a single volume listed, and that was ten years ago, priced at one guinea. A very important volume which so few seem to know about was published by the Carey Press in London in 1924, called *Missionary Sermons,* "a selection from the discourses delivered on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society on various occasions." These twenty-three sermons extend in time of deliverance from Charles Spurgeon in 1858 to the one by Mr. Thomas Phillips in 1924. Two of the outstanding authorities on missionary literature in this country have told me personally that they had never even heard of this volume.

There is one more important source of printed material, and that is the index volumes of our more important religious periodicals, when such index volumes have appeared. I need only mention two. In 1910 the *Expository Times* issued a volume of 126 pages, three columns to a page, indexing that periodical for the first twenty volumes, down to 1900. Would that we had another index today including all the past sixty years. It would be a key to the theological and expository treasures of the English language. Funk and Wagnalls in 1896 issued a large volume of over five hundred pages, printed only on one side of the page, indexing the first thirty volumes of what became the *Homiletical Review,* beginning with the *Metropolitan Pulpit,* then the *Homiletical Monthly,* and then, the *Homiletical Review.* Thousands of sermons are indexed here. How rich and revealing would an index to the whole series of the *British Weekly* be to those who love the best in religious journalism.

In surveying this literature, I think three things are clear:

First, many of the greatest evangelical texts in the Scriptures have had, strange to say, scant treatment, and frequently one will discover very little on a great text from which he must preach. Secondly, a minister will do well to begin his own index. He does not need to index Maclaren, because he can instantly determine whether Maclaren has a sermon on the text he wishes; nor does he need to index the *Expositor's Bible,* or Parker's *The People's Bible* (unless he has a secretary who is not busy, or perhaps his wife might do it). But he ought to index everything not so indexed of a sermonic nature that he comes upon which he thinks is important, and in doing so, as the years move on, he will have a supplement to all the other homiletical indexes he may possess that will prove invaluable to him, especially just in the hour when he most needs it.

Last of all—and how I wish this paragraph would strike fire somewhere in our country, or perhaps in Great Britain—is there not a young man just starting out in the ministry, with a small congregation, in a parish near Chicago, Boston, or New York—the three greatest centers of theological libraries in America—who would herewith set himself the task of indexing the best sermonic literature, say, from 1850 to 1950? Perhaps some publisher would be willing to partially subsidize this, so he could have an additional income. At the same time he would not be robbing his people, but rather doing his own work faithfully and enriching his mind and his ministry with daily acquaintance, for hours at a time, with the great sermonic classics of the last century. It would be a boon to clergymen everywhere, and certainly would have a wide sale. He would not grow rich from it, but he would be repaid for it, even from a monetary standpoint. I am sure that publishers everywhere would be happy to co-operate with him in placing at his disposal their sermonic publications, and there is not a kinder group of people in the world

than the librarians of our theological seminaries. I solemnly commend this task to some young man beginning his ministry, or, to one at the other end of life, to one past sixty, retired with sufficient means for comfort, who would spend the last ten years of his life prosecuting this delightful task.

5

A FAMOUS LEGAL AUTHORITY ON THE DEPENDABILITY OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS

Some of the greatest legal minds in every age have been at the same time outstanding Christians. It would be a most interesting study to discuss the place that the Bible holds in the great legal works of the western world since the dawn of Christianity. Some of my readers may not know that the great legal work by Blackstone begins with the Ten Commandments. The Bible is not only frequently depended upon for ethical standards, but in thousands of great legal cases quotations from the Bible have been used with tremendous effectiveness. I once came upon a title of a little book which I have never been able to find in this country—John M. Gest: *The Influence of Biblical Texts upon English Law.*

There is a famous work which sets forth the value of the testimony of the Four Evangelists—that is, the authors of the first four books of the New Testament—by the greatest authority on evidence, from a legal standpoint, in the 19th century. The author of this work is Simon Greenleaf, born at Newburyport, Massachusetts, in 1783, where his ancestors had lived for nearly 150 years. His grandfather was the Rev. Jonathan Parsons of that city. After a thorough education and some time spent in the law office of Ezekiel Whitman, later Chief Justice of Maine, he was admitted to the Cumberland County Bar in June, 1806, and established a practice which soon became unusually extensive in the city of Gray, Maine. In the leisure which he had during a period of twelve years, he devoted himself to "an extensive study of the common law,

reading widely and deeply and obtaining familiarity with the source material which no other practitioner of his time possessed. In 1818 he removed to Portland whither his reputation for learning had preceded him, and at once took his place among the leaders of the bar there."

He was appointed reporter of the Supreme Judicial Court in 1820, his reports immediately obtaining great reputation; in fact, they established new standards for the legal profession. In 1833 Justice Joseph Story offered Greenleaf the Royall Professorship of Law at Harvard, he himself holding the Dane Professorship of Law at the same university. Here he and Story labored together for thirteen years. "It is," says Greenleaf's biographer, "to the efforts of Story and Greenleaf that is to be ascribed the rise of the Harvard Law School to its eminent position among the legal schools of the United States."

In 1848 he prepared what originally was intended as a textbook on evidence, his famous work—*A Treatise on the Law of Evidences*—which "the profession at once hailed as the ablest extant work on the subject, distinguished alike for its deep learning, clarity of style, and practical utility. In its completed form it came to be regarded as the foremost American authority."

I have been examining the various editions of Greenleaf's great work in the Elbert H. Gary Library of the Northwestern Law School, and I was surprised to discover that even the first edition, which appeared in three volumes from 1842–1853, was a work, including table of contents and indexes, of nearly 2,000 pages. The editions followed rapidly and appeared as follows: 1842, 1844, 1846, 1848, 1850, 1852, 1854, 1856, 1858, 1860, 1863, 1866, 1876, 1883, 1892. In other words, twelve editions of this work followed one another almost every two years, a wonderful record for *any* book, especially a huge three-volume work on legal evidences. The 16th edition, I

notice, which was published in 1899, was edited by no less a person than Dean Wigmore, the distinguished Dean for many years of the Northwestern Law School, and himself one of the greatest legal minds in America. In the preface to this work, Dean Wigmore makes the statement that "in the opinions of every court for the last fifty years occur references to this work of Greenleaf's."

For some reason no adequate life of Greenleaf has ever been written, and I am not able to find out very much about his own personal religious beliefs, though the book we are discussing will itself reveal some interesting things, and show him to be a firm believer in the great truths of the Christian faith.

In 1846, when Greenleaf was 63 years of age (he died seven years later), he published a volume that immediately became famous among Christian scholars on both sides of the Atlantic —*An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists By the Rules of Evidence Administered in Courts of Justice, With an Account of the Trial of Jesus.* (My copy of this work runs to 543 pages.)

Now, when the greatest authority on legal evidences of the 19th Century undertakes to devote a volume to an examination of the testimony of the writers of the Four Gospels, according to the rules of evidence of the courts of justice, we may expect something not only definitely worth while, but something worthy of most careful consideration. A thirteen-page essay concludes this volume on "The Trial of Jesus." Part of the book (pages 69–115) is a beautifully and clearly arranged harmony of all the material in the Four Gospels according to the arrangement of that distinguished New Testament scholar, Dr. Edward Robinson.

It is with Greenleaf's essay of about 45 pages, which he calls "Preliminary Observations," that we will be for the most part concerned, but before examining this chapter, we should

read his dedication. It is a longer dedication than one generally finds in any volume, addressed "To the Members of the Legal Profession." I wish sometimes I could just reprint this dedication alone, and send it to every lawyer in America. This is what he says to his fellow-colleagues, men, who by that time, must have been using in their law office his own great work on legal evidence.

"The subject of the following work I hope will not be deemed so foreign to our professional pursuits, as to render it improper for me to dedicate it, as I now respectfully do, to you. If a close examination of the evidences of Christianity may be expected of one class of men more than another, it would seem incumbent on us, who make the law of evidence one of our peculiar studies. Our profession leads us to explore the mazes of falsehood, to detect its artifices, to pierce its thickest veils, to follow and expose its sophistries, to compare the statements of different witnesses with severity, to discover truth and separate it from error. Our fellow-men are well aware of this; and probably they act upon this knowledge more generally, and with a more profound repose, than we are in the habit of considering. The influence, too, of the legal profession upon the community is unquestionably great; conversant, as it daily is, with all classes and grades of men, in their domestic and social relations, and in all the affairs of life, from the cradle to the grave. This influence we are constantly exerting for good or ill; and hence, to refuse to acquaint ourselves with the evidences of the Christian religion, or to act as though, having fully examined, we lightly esteemed them, is to assume an appalling amount of responsibility.

"The things related by the Evangelists are certainly of the most momentous character, affecting the principles of our conduct here, and our happiness forever. The religion

of Jesus Christ aims at nothing less than the utter overthrow of all other systems of religion in the world; denouncing them as inadequate to the wants of man, false in their foundations and dangerous in their tendency. It not only solicits the grave attention of all, to whom its doctrines are presented, but it demands their cordial belief, as a matter of vital concernment. These are no ordinary claims; and it seems hardly possible for a rational being to regard them with even a subdued interest; much less to treat them with mere indifference and contempt. If not true, they are little else than the pretensions of a bold imposture, which, not satisfied with having already enslaved millions of the human race, seeks to continue its encroachments upon human liberty, until all nations shall be subjugated under its iron rule. But if they are well founded and just, they can be no less than the high requirements of heaven, addressed by the voice of God to the reason and understanding of man, concerning things deeply affecting his relations to his sovereign, and essential to the formation of his character and of course to his destiny, both for this life and for the life to come. Such was the estimate taken of religion, even the religion of pagan Rome, by one of the greatest lawyers of antiquity, when he argued that it was either nothing at all, or was everything.

"With this view of the importance of the subject, and in the hope that the present work may in some degree aid or at least incite others to a more successful pursuit of this interesting study, it is submitted to your kind regard, by

Your obedient servant,

Simon Greenleaf."

On the very first page of his opening chapter, Greenleaf makes a very humble statement concerning our very attitude toward religious truth and the Word of God as we approach the Scriptures to examine what they have to say, giving a

remarkable and famous quotation from Lord Bacon. These are Greenleaf's words.

> "In examining the evidences of the Christian religion, it is essential to the discovery of truth that we bring to the investigation a mind freed, as far as possible, from existing prejudice and open to conviction. There should be a readiness, on our part, to investigate with candor, to follow the truth wherever it may lead us, and to submit, without reserve or objection, to all the teachings of this religion, if it be found to be of divine origin. 'There is no other entrance,' says Lord Bacon, 'to the kingdom of man, which is founded in the sciences, than to the kingdom of heaven, into which no one can enter but in the character of a little child.' The docility which true philosophy requires of her disciples is not a spirit of servility, or the surrender of the reason and judgment to whatsoever the teacher may inculcate; but it is a mind free from all pride of opinion, not hostile to the truth sought for, willing to pursue the inquiry and impartially to weigh the arguments and evidence, and to acquiesce in the judgment of right reason. The investigation, moreover, should be pursued with the serious earnestness which becomes the greatness of the subject—a subject fraught with such momentous consequences to man. It should be pursued as in the presence of God, and under the solemn sanctions created by a lively sense of his omniscience, and of our accountability to him for the right use of the faculties which he has bestowed."

Greenleaf next considers the argument advanced by some that because the actual originals of the Four Gospels, the very autographs of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are lost, therefore we cannot be sure that the Gospels which we have are identical with those which the Four Evangelists wrote, and answers that objection in the following words:

"If it be objected that the originals are lost, and that copies alone are now produced, the principles of the municipal law here also afford a satisfactory answer. The multiplication of copies was a public fact, in the faithfulness of which all the Christian community had an interest. In matters of public and general interest, all persons must be presumed to be conversant, on the principle that individuals are presumed to be conversant with their own affairs; and therefore, in such matters, the prevailing current of assertion is resorted to as evidence, for it is to this that every member of the community is supposed to be privy. The persons, moreover, who multiplied these copies, may be regarded, in some manner, as the agents of the Christian public, for whose use and benefit the copies were made; and on the ground of the credit due to such agents, and of the public nature of the facts themselves, the copies thus made are entitled to an extraordinary degree of confidence, and, as in the case of official registers and other public books, it is not necessary that they should be confirmed and sanctioned by the ordinary tests of truth. If any ancient document concerning our public rights were lost, copies which had been as universally received and acted upon as the Four Gospels have been, would have been received in evidence in any of our courts of justice, without the slightest hesitation. The entire text of the Corpus Juris Civilis is received as authority in all the courts of continental Europe, upon much weaker evidence of its genuineness; for the integrity of the Sacred Text has been preserved by the jealousy of opposing sects, beyond any moral possibility of corruption; while that of the Roman Civil Law has been preserved only by tacit consent, without the interest of any opposing school, to watch over and preserve it from alteration."

Next, our learned author proceeds to discuss the very important subject of what he calls "moral evidence."

"Supposing the reader, therefore, to admit that it is not irrational, nor inconsistent with sound philosophy, to believe that God has made a special and express revelation of his character and will to man, and that the sacred books of our religion are genuine, as we now have them, our present object is, to compare the testimony of the Four Evangelists, as witnesses to the life, doctrine, and miracles of Jesus Christ, in order to determine the degree of credit to which, by the rules of evidence applied in human tribunals, they are justly entitled. The proper inquiry will be, not whether it is possible that the testimony may be false, for this is not the manner in which evidence is examined in courts of justice; but, whether there is sufficient probability that it is true. *The subject of inquiry is matter of fact, and not matter of abstract mathematical truth.* The latter alone is susceptible of that high degree of evidence which we call demonstration, which excludes the possibility of error, and which therefore may reasonably be required in support of every mathematical deduction. But the proof of matters of fact rests upon moral evidence alone; by which is meant not only that species of evidence which is employed in cases respecting moral conduct, but all the evidence which we do not obtain either from our own senses, from intuition, or from demonstration. In the ordinary affairs of life we do not require nor expect demonstrative evidence, because it is inconsistent with the nature of matters of fact, and to insist on its production would be unreasonable and absurd. And it makes no difference, whether the facts to be proved relate to this life or to the next, the nature of the evidence required being in both cases the same. The error of the skeptic consists in pretending or supposing that there is a difference in the evidence,

where there is no difference in the nature of the things to be proved, and in demanding demonstrative evidence concerning things which are not susceptible of any other than moral evidence alone, and of which the utmost that can be said, is, that there is no reasonable doubt of their truth. . . .

"Proceeding further, to inquire whether the facts related by the Four Evangelists are proved by competent and satisfactory evidence, we are led, first, to consider on which side lies the burden of establishing the credibility of the witnesses. The very statement of such a question startles us, because, in the affairs of ordinary life, the uniform course is to presume every witness to be credible until the contrary is shown; the burden of proof lying on the objector. But this only serves to show the injustice with which the writers of the Gospels have ever been treated by infidels; an injustice silently acquiesced in even by Christians; in requiring the Christian affirmatively, and by positive evidence, *aliunde,* to establish the credibility of his witnesses above all others, before their testimony is entitled to be considered, and in permitting the testimony of a single profane writer, alone and uncorroborated, to outweigh that of any single Christian. This is not the course in courts of chancery, where the testimony of a single witness is never permitted to outweigh the oath even of the defendant himself, interested as he is in the cause; but, on the contrary, if the plaintiff, after having required the oath of his adversary, cannot overthrow it by something more than the oath of one witness, however credible, it must stand as evidence against him. But the Christian writer seems, by the usual course of the argument, to have been deprived of the common presumption of charity in his favor; and, reversing the ordinary rule of administering justice in human tribunals, his testimony is unjustly pre-

sumed to be false, until it is proved to be true. This treatment, moreover, has been applied to them all in a body; and, without due regard to the fact, that, being independent historians, writing at different periods, they are entitled to the support of each other, they have been treated, in the argument, almost as if the New Testament were the entire production, at once, of a body of men, conspiring, by a joint fabrication, to impose a false religion upon the world. It is time that this injustice should cease; that the testimony of the Evangelists should be admitted to be true, until it can be disproved by those who would impugn it; that the silence of one sacred writer, on any point, should no more detract from his own veracity or that of the other historians, than the like circumstances is permitted to do among profane writers; that the Four Evangelists should be admitted in corroboration of each other, as readily as Josephus and Tacitus, or Polybius and Livy."

Incidentally, in discussing moral evidence, Greenleaf refers to a book, which I have never seen, and do not discover in any great library in Chicago, by one by the name of Gambier, carrying the title, *Guide to the Study of Moral Evidence.*

Our author next proceeds to discuss the dependability of the Evangelists as witnesses, believing that the Gospels as we have them are verily those which the Four Evangelists wrote, and thus can be depended upon in the evidence which they present concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

"But if it were conceded, that the burden of establishing the credibility of the Evangelists, as witnesses, rested upon those who affirm the truth of their narratives, it is still capable of a ready moral demonstration, if we consider the nature of their testimony, and the essential marks of difference between narratives of facts, as they actually

occurred, and the creations of falsehood. It is universally admitted that much of the credit to be given to witnesses, depends on their ability to discern and comprehend the nature of what they saw and heard, their opportunities for observation, and the degree of accuracy with which they are accustomed to mark passing events. But much also depends on their integrity; for without this requisite, very little reliance can be placed on any other, aside from corroborating and foreign testimony. After a witness is dead, and his moral character is forgotten, we can ascertain it only by a close inspection of his narrative, comparing its details with each other, and with contemporary accounts and collateral facts. This test is much more accurate than may at first be supposed. Every event which actually transpires, has its appropriate relation and place in the vast complication of circumstances, of which the affairs of men consist; it owes its origin to the events which have preceded it; it is intimately connected with all others which occur at the same time and place, and often with those of remote regions, and in its turn it gives birth to numberless others which succeed. In all this almost inconceivable contexture, and seeming discord, there is perfect harmony; and while the fact, which really happened, tallies exactly with every other contemporaneous incident related to it in the remotest degree, it is not possible for the wit of man to invent a story, which, if closely compared with the actual occurrences of the same time and place, may not be shown to be false. Hence it is that a false witness will not willingly detail any circumstances in which his testimony will be open to contradiction; nor multiply them, where there is danger of his being detected, by a comparison of them with other accounts, equally circumstantial. He will rather deal in general statements and broad assertions; and if he finds it necessary for his purpose to employ names and particular

circumstances in his story, he will endeavor to invent such as shall be out of the reach of all opposing proof; and will be most forward and minute in his details, where he knows that any danger of contradiction is at least apprehended. Therefore it is that variety and minuteness of detail are usually regarded as certain tests of sincerity, if the story, in the circumstances related, is of a nature capable of easy refutation if it were false.

"There is this remarkable difference between artful or false witnesses, and those who testify the truth, in their detail of circumstances. The former are often copious and even profuse in their statements, as far as these have been previously fabricated, and in relation to the principal matter; but beyond this, all will be reserved and meagre, from the fear of detection. Every lawyer knows how lightly the evidence of a non-mi-recordo witness is esteemed. The testimony of false witnesses will not be uniform in its texture, but will be unequal, unnatural and inconsistent. On the contrary, in the testimony of true witnesses there is a visible and striking naturalness of manner, and an unaffected readiness and copiousness in the detail of circumstances, as well as in one part of the narrative as another, and evidently without the least regard either to the facility or difficulty of verification or detection. It is easier, therefore, to make out the proof of any fact, if proof it may be called, by suborning one or more false witnesses to testify directly to the matter in question, than to procure an equal number to testify falsely to such collateral and separate circumstances as will, without greater danger of detection, lead to the same false result. The increased number of witnesses to circumstances, and the increased number of the circumstances themselves, all tend to increase the probability of detection if the witnesses are false, because thereby the points are multiplied in which their

statements may be compared with each other, as well as with the truth itself, and in the same proportion is increased the danger of variance and inconsistency. Thus the force of circumstantial evidence is found to depend on the number of particulars involved in the narrative; the difficulty of fabricating them all, if false, and the great facility of detection; the nature of the circumstances to be compared, and from which the dates and other facts are to be collected; the intricacy of the comparison; the number of the intermediate steps in the process of deduction; and the circuity of the investigation. The more largely the narrative partakes of these characters, the further it will be found removed from all suspicion of contrivance or design, and the more profoundly the mind will repose on the conviction of its truth.

"The narratives of the sacred writers, both Jewish and Christian, abound in examples of this kind of evidence, the value of which is hardly capable of being properly estimated. It does not, as has been already remarked, amount to mathematical demonstration; nor is this degree of proof justly demandable in any question of moral conduct. In all human transactions, the highest degree of assurance to which we can arrive, short of the evidence of our own senses, is that of probability. The most that can be asserted is, that the narrative is more likely to be true than false; and it may be in the highest degree more likely, but still be short of being absolutely certain. Yet this very probability may be so great as to satisfy the mind of the most cautious, and enforce the assent of the most reluctant and unbelieving. If it is such as usually satisfies reasonable men, in matters of ordinary transaction, it is all which the greatest skeptic has a right to require; for it is by such evidence alone that our rights are determined, in the civil tribunals; and on no other evidence do they proceed, even

in capital cases. Thus, where a house had been feloniously broken open with a knife, the blade of which was broken and left in the window, and the mutilated knife itself, the parts perfectly agreeing, was found in the pocket of the accused, who gave no satisfactory explanation of the fact, no reasonable doubt remained of his participation in the crime. And where a murder had been committed by shooting with a pistol, and the prisoner was connected with the transaction by proof that the wadding of the pistol was part of a letter addressed to him, the remainder of which was found upon his person, no juror's conscience could have reproached him for assenting to the verdict of condemnation. Yet the evidence, in both cases, is but the evidence of circumstances; amounting, it is true, to the highest degree of probability, but yet not utterly inconsistent with the innocence of the accused. The evidence which we have of the great facts of the Bible history belongs to this class, that is, it is moral evidence; sufficient to satisfy any rational mind, though falling short of mathematical demonstration. If such evidence will justify the taking away of human life or liberty, in the one case, surely it ought to be deemed sufficient to determine our faith, in the other.

"All that Christianity asks of men, on this subject, is, that they would be consistent with themselves; that they would treat its evidences as they treat the evidence of other things; and that they would try and judge its actors and witnesses, as they deal with their fellow-men, when testifying of human actions and affairs, in human tribunals. Let the witnesses be compared with themselves, with each other, with their contemporaries, and with surrounding facts and circumstances; and let their testimony be sifted, as if it were given in a court of justice, on the side of the adverse party, the witnesses being subject to a rigorous cross-examination. The result, it is confidently believed,

will be an undoubting conviction of their integrity, ability and truth. In the course of such an examination, the undesigned coincidences will multiply upon us at every step in our progress; and the probability of the veracity of the witnesses and of the reality of the occurrences which they relate, will increase, till it acquires, for all practical purposes, the force of demonstration."

After he has set forth these fundamental rules which no one can deny, Greenleaf then proceeds to give brief character sketches of each of the Four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, but this we must pass over. He holds up, however, the character of these four men in the following words:

"Such is the brief history of the witnesses, whose narratives we are to compare and examine. That they had the best possible opportunities to know the truth of the facts which they narrate, can hardly admit of a doubt, since three of them (Mark being understood, as we have seen, to give the testimony of Peter), were intelligent personal attendants and intimate associates of Jesus during the whole period of his ministry; and the fourth was a contemporary, familiarly conversant with the eye-witnesses of the transactions which he has recorded, and of which he also had perfect knowledge from the beginning. It is equally apparent that they were accurate observers. We may safely assume that they were men of ordinary accuracy, till the contrary is shown by an objector. It is always to be presumed that men are honest, and of sound mind, and of ordinary intelligence. This is not the judgment of mere charity; it is also the uniform presumption of the law of the land; a presumption which is allowed freely and fully to operate, until the contrary is proved by the part who denies the applicability of this presumption to the particular case in question. Whenever an objection is raised

in opposition to the ordinary presumptions of the law, or to the ordinary experience of mankind, the burden of proof is devolved on the objector, by the common and ordinary rules of evidence and of practice in courts. No lawyer would be permitted to argue to a jury in disparagement of the intelligence or integrity of a witness, against whom the case itself afforded no particle of testimony. This is sufficient for our purpose in regard to these witnesses. But more than this is evident, from the minuteness of their narratives, and from their history. Matthew was trained, by his calling, to habits of severe investigation and suspicious scrutiny; and Luke's profession demanded an exactness of observation equally close and searching. If, then, the evangelists were men of integrity and disposed to testify the truth, the facts they relate may be taken as *proved;* since, as we have before remarked, every matter which is the subject of moral evidence is *proved,* when it is shown by competent and satisfactory testimony.

"The great truths which the apostles declared, were, that Christ had risen from the dead, and that only through repentance from sin, and faith in him, could men hope for salvation. This doctrine they asserted with one voice, everywhere, not only under the greatest discouragements, but in the face of the most appalling terrors that can be presented to the mind of man. Their master had recently perished as a malefactor, by the sentence of a public tribunal. His religion sought to overthrow the religions of the whole world. The laws of every country were against the teachings of his disciples. The interests and passions of all the rulers and great men in the world were against them. The fashion of the world was against them. Propagating this new faith, even in the most inoffensive and peaceful manner, they could expect nothing but contempt, opposition, revilings, bitter persecutions, stripes, imprison-

ments, torments and cruel deaths. Yet this faith they zealously did propagate; and all these miseries they endured undismayed, nay, rejoicing. As one after another was put to a miserable death, the survivors only prosecuted their work with increased vigor and resolution. The annals of military warfare afford scarcely an example of the like heroic constancy, patience and unblenching courage. They had every possible motive to review carefully the grounds of their faith, and the evidences of the great facts and truths which they asserted; and these motives were pressed upon their attention with the most melancholy and terrific frequency. It was therefore impossible that they could have persisted in affirming the truths they have narrated, had not Jesus actually risen from the dead, and had they not known this fact as certainly as they knew any other fact. If it were morally possible for them to have been deceived in this matter, every human motive operated to lead them to discover and avow their error. To have persisted in so gross a falsehood, after it was known to them, was not only to encounter, for life, all the evils which man could inflict, from without, but to endure also the pangs of inward and conscious guilt; with no hope of future peace, no testimony of a good conscience, no expectation of honor or esteem among men, no hope of happiness in this life, or in the world to come. . . .

"It would also have been irreconcilable with the fact that they were good men. But it is impossible to read their writings, and not feel that we are conversing with men eminently holy, and of tender consciences, with men acting under an abiding sense of the presence and omniscience of God, and of their accountability to him, living in his fear, and walking in his ways. Now, though, in a single instance, a good man may fall, when under strong temptations, yet he is not found persisting, for years, in deliberate

falsehood, asserted with the most solemn appeals to God, without the slightest temptation or motive, and against all the opposing interests which reign in the human breast. If, on the contrary, they are supposed to have been bad men, it is incredible that such men should have chosen this form of imposture; enjoining, as it does, unfeigned repentance, the utter forsaking and abhorrence of all falsehood and of every other sin, the practice of daily self-denial, self-abasement and self-sacrifice, the crucifixion of the flesh with all its earthly appetites and desires, indifference to the honors, and hearty contempt of the vanities of the world; and inculcating perfect purity and holiness of heart and life, and intercourse of the soul with heaven. It is incredible, that bad men should invent falsehoods to promote the religion of the God of truth. The supposition is suicidal. If they did believe in a future state of retribution, a heaven and a hell hereafter, they took the most certain course, if false witnesses, to secure the latter for their portion. And if, still being bad men, they did not believe in future punishment, how came they to invent falsehoods, the direct and certain tendency of which was to destroy all their prospects of worldly honor and happiness, and to ensure their misery in this life? From these absurdities there is no escape, but in the perfect conviction and admission that they were good men, testifying to that which they had carefully observed and considered and well knew to be true."

Since this chapter was written, I have had a communication from the librarian of Harvard Law School introducing me to a book that every serious student of the Scriptures ought to possess, which I am now happy to say is in my own library. It was published by Binsford and Mort of Portland, Oregon, in 1944, and is exactly the work for which I have been looking for years, a volume of over three hundred pages of text and twenty-five columns of a thorough index.

The full title will exactly describe the contents of this volume: *Biblical Law; Being a Test of the Statutes, Ordinances, and Judgments Established in the Holy Bible—With Many Allusions to Secular Laws: Ancient Medieval and Modern—Documented to the Scriptures' Judicial Decisions and Legal Literature,* by H. B. Clark.

6

THE FIRST BATTLE OF SACRED HISTORY

As every Bible student knows, the first of perhaps forty different battles mentioned in 1500 years of the history of Israel and the Hebrew people is found in a very ancient document in the fourteenth chapter of the Book of Genesis, dealing with an episode in Abraham's life. Probably, if Abraham had not been involved in the military campaigns which are referred to here, we would not have had this narrative in the Bible. It is commonly agreed that it is the oldest account of a battle in any written literature of the world, and most scholars believe that it was written within, say, one or two hundred years after the event described here took place—that is, some hundreds of years before Moses himself wrote the first five books of the Bible, by which we mean that no doubt he had an ancient document recording this military campaign before him.

Within sixteen verses we have the names of ten men or nations, and the names of twenty cities, mountains or tribal areas, scattered all over the Near East, and unless we get these thirty names straight and remember to which group each belongs, the whole narrative will be but a mass of confusion to us. We divide, then, our study into four parts. First of all we have listed the names of some powerful kings in the East who came down to make war against the kings of five cities of the plain, that is, five cities near the Dead Sea, and exactly where, we will soon discover. The chapter begins with these words: "And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations; these made war with—." It is generally agreed

by all scholars that Amraphel is none other than Hammurabi of Sumer.

The word here translated nations is the word *goiim*, the regular Hebrew word meaning *nations*, or, *peoples*. It is not yet determined whether goiim wàs a separate nation carrying the name not otherwise known to us, or that the whole phrase means that Tidal was the king of a large number of nations. Some identify them with the Hittites of the North who at this period were beginning to intervene in Mesopotamia.

Now, we are told that these kings together came this long distance of some eight hundred miles down to Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim and Bela, to make war against them and probably to plunder them of their wealth and take some of their citizens as captives. Two of these cities are those that were destroyed in the terrible judgment that followed in the same generation when fire and brimstone came down from heaven to annihilate the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Admah is once again mentioned later in the Scriptures as being involved in this overthrow.

As to where these cities were located, it is generally thought that all of them were at the southern end of the Dead Sea, and that probably the present waters of the Dead Sea now cover the exact sites on which these cities stood. These kings, it is said, were joined together "in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea." As everyone knows, the Salt Sea is the Dead Sea, called Salt Sea because it contains 26¼% of saline particles. (See Numbers 34:3 and 12.) In Deuteronomy 3:17 and Joshua 3:16, it is called the Sea of Arabah. In Ezekiel 47:18, etc. it is called the Eastern Sea; in Josephus it is known as the Sea of Asphalt and in the Jewish Talmud as the Sea of Sodom. The name Dead Sea, as far as we know, was not used of this body of water until the fifth century in the time of Jerome. What these invading kings from Babylon accomplished in their first expedition we do not know, except that they sub-

dued these five cities, though no account is given of the invasion itself or of the battle. After serving Chedorlaomer, seemingly the chief of these monarchs, in the thirteenth year, these kings rebelled, probably hearing that Chedorlaomer and his confederates were already completely occupied with other conflicts and concluding that they would not be able to come down and hold their previous conquest. But in this they were deceived. The next year there returned Chedorlaomer and the kings that had engaged in this conquest fourteen years before, but now instead of seizing only these five cities, they swept all the way down into Arabia and seemingly conquered the whole country east of the Jordan for some 400 miles. All the matter quoted in the next few pages, unless otherwise identified, is from a remarkable volume published in London, the *Times of Abraham,* by H. G. Tomkins.

"Drawing together the contingents of the different states in Babylonia, Kedor-la'omer would pass up the Euphrates, cross the Khabour, perhaps at Arban (ancient Sidikan), the Belik near Kharran, the Euphrates at Carchemish, and so by the route which we have described in tracing the migration of Abram, passing Aleppo, Hamath, and Emesa (where, perhaps, already the sons of Kheth were entrenched in their lake-fortress). The further march is indicated in the Biblical narrative, if we take for granted (which we may well do) that the army returned over the same ground, excepting where the contrary is stated; Kedor-la'omer then doubtless received the homage and tribute of the ruler of Damascus; but, instead of pouring down the valley of the Jordan in a direct course to the revolted cities, he first cut off their supports, and completely cleared his flanks by an extended campaign; for, sweeping all the highland plateau to the east of Jordan, and following the great ancient course of commerce where now the Hadj road goes down into Arabia, he chastised and disabled the old-world tribes who had evidently shared in the rebellion."

"The first of these tribes whom he 'smote' were the Rephaim, to whose race in after time Og king of Bashan belonged. They are called Amorites; and Og is expressly called by that name (Joshua 9:10), a 'king of the Amorites.' Their stronghold was Ashteroth Karnaim, the site of which has as yet been only a subject of conjecture; but the name appears clearly to refer to the goddess Astarte, represented with the two horns of the crescent, as, for instance, on the interesting Syrian altar brought home by the late Mr. C. F. Tyrwhitt Drake, and now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The name is found in Egyptian inscriptions, not only as a goddess of the Kheta (Hittites), but also as that of a place, Astaratu, in the Karnak Lists of Thothmes III, and identified by Mariette-Bey with this ancient city of the Rephaim."

"The next tribe southwards which he encountered was the Zuzim in Ham, which has been identified with Hameitat about six miles to the east of the lower part of the Dead Sea. (Here are extensive ruins, and 'the name (of Ham) is read in the Targums,' says Canon Tristram, 'Hemta,' very nearly the name given to him on the spot. The name Zuzim occurs nowhere else in the Bible.) After defeating these people, Kedor-la'omer smote the Emim in Shaveh-Kiriathaim; that is, of the twin-towns. This name also does not recur in Scripture; but in the Egyptian records I think we find it: for in the travels of the Mohar, a most interesting papyrus (elaborately edited by M. Chabas, and treated by Dr. Haigh, and by Lieut. Conder, R.E.), we have the mountain of the Shaua mentioned as in the country of the Shasu, and, immediately after, the road to Pa-Makar. Now if Makar be Machaerus (now M'kaur and probably the Hebrew well-spring), then the mountain of Shaua may well be Shaveh Kiriathaim, which may probably be in this neighborhood, perhaps at Kureitun near Kerak, as the Emim would be to the south of the Zuzim. The name Shaua is given by Brugsch-Bey as synonymous with

Shasu. It is interesting to note in an inscription of Tiglath Pileser II, the mention of 'the land of Bahalizephon as far as Amman (Ammon), the land of Izku and Saua."

"However this may be, Brugsch-Bey has identified the 'Saaru of the tribes of Shasu' who were conquered by Rameses III, with the Seirites. In those later times, however, these Saaru did not live in rock-hewn dwellings, it seems, but in huts.

"Their wild and inaccessible range of mountains stretched from the Dead Sea to the gulf of Akaba, which bounds to the east the Sinaitic peninsula, and the mountaineers of Elam must have found congenial scenes while chasing these hardy clans in their perilous fastnesses. This achievement the eastern commanders appear to have thoroughly carried out, even 'unto El Paran' (the oak of Paran, as generally understood) 'which is by the wilderness.' This wilderness (Heb. midbar) bore the name of Paran, wherever El Paran itself may have been. It is clear that this was the extreme limit of the expedition, and before reaching it the whole range of mountains must have been harried, and the Khorites thoroughly put down. In Arrowsmith's Map of Syria (1823), a place called 'Phara, Paran' is marked on the Roman road running westwards from Akaba towards Suez. It is some twelve miles south of the Hadj route to Egypt. 'A genuine trace of it (the ancient Paran) may perhaps be found in the Phara, marked in the Roman tables of the fourth century as a station on the road between the heads of the two gulfs, one hundred and twenty Roman miles from the western, and fifty from the eastern extremity.' This is the place, and it would be *in* the wilderness; but the expression in the Hebrew text seems consistent with this. In this case Kedor-la'omer would have cleared the whole route to the gulf of Akaba and the mining region of the Sinaitic peninsula; and as that would seem to have been the great object of his expedition, and, moreover,

as the same achievement appears to have been carried out by Naram-Sin, I do not see any difficulty in believing, that after overcoming the formidable obstacles which lay in his path he should have attained such a point (if not even the Paran of the Wady Feiran) before 'they returned, and came to En-Mishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites.' This would seem to suggest the sweeping a broad expanse of desert, and would be consistent with the Kadesh (Kadesh-Barnea) being the 'Ain Gadis described by Professor Palmer. Kadesh was a great stronghold, both a sanctuary and a seat of government, as the names indicate, and probably the 'Kadesh of the land of Amaor' captured by Seti I. As represented in the Egyptian relief this fortified place has no moat, but is on a hill-side in a cultivated country, and has a pool with plants growing round its banks, and herdsmen are driving cattle away. It is defended by the Amorites."

"And now Kedor-la'omer began to draw towards the special end of his expedition. Having made good his rear by 'smiting all the country of the Amalekites,' he made his way towards the 'Salt sea,' skirting along its western border. 'Up to En-gedi they could march without interruption,' writes Canon Tristram, 'by the shores of the sea below; and though there were several openings south of En-gedi, by which troops could easily make the ascent into the upper country, yet any of them would necessitate a long march across a rough and almost waterless wilderness. Practically, then, Ziz was the key to the pass. To the north of it the shore-line is impracticable even for footmen, and there are no paths by which beasts could be led up. Hence the old importance of Hazezon-Tamar, or En-gedi, which is still the route by which the trade between Jerusalem and Kerak (Kir of Moab, a formidable fortress on the east side of the Dead sea) is carried on, and by which the former city obtains its supplies of salt.'

"Here, then, half way up the western side of the deep hot 'Salt sea,' the leader of the conquering forces was unable to push on by the shore, and compelled to force the difficult and steep pass to the left. There lay before him the beautiful recess of the mountains where the Amorites had nestled in their choice settlement of Hazezon-Tamar, 'the pruning of the palm,' afterwards and still called En-gedi ('Ain-Jidy) the well-spring of the kid."

"Following the track of Kedor-la'omer, the sons of Moab, Ammon, and Seir ascended to Judaea by this precipitous way.

"Thus we have a double identification of this historic spot, haunted by such primaeval remembrances of war, in the names Husasa, and 'Ain-Jidy. There is also a Wady Husasa about six or seven miles further north.

"After smiting the valiant Amorites in their green and palmy nook under the mountains, the host of the eastern kings clomb the perilous height. 'The path is a mere zigzag, chiefly artificial, cut out of the side of the precipices, but occasionally aided by nature.' The height is about 1800 feet. Then the march must have been over the high hill-tops, and down across the wadys, and so by a bending route until they came into the Jordan valley, perhaps on the level at the northwest corner of the lake, 'a proper and natural spot for the inhabitants of the plain of Jericho to attack a hostile force descending from the passes of 'Ain Jidy.'

"The fight at Hazezon Tamar had been within seventeen or eighteen miles of Abram's abode at Mamre, and the march inland over the hills must have brought the army of Kedor-la'omer still nearer. Abram's allies, An'er, Eschol, and Mamre, Amorites though they were, do not appear to have been engaged with their kinsmen in the lost battle; but it must have been a time of great alarm when the Elamite king was pouring down his forces into the vale of Siddim. 'And there went out

the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; with Kedor-la'omer king of Elam, and with Tidal (Turgal) king of Nations (Goiim), and Amarpal king of Shinar, and Ariok king of Ellasar; four kings with five. And the vale of Siddim was full of slime-pits (bitumen-pits). And the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah (it does not say, of the other three cities) and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed."

How the whole attitude of the modern world concerning this ancient historical record has changed! A century ago the founder of destructive higher criticism, or at least its most powerful advocate, Wellhausen, actually dared to deny that Abraham was even an historical person, and no less a scholar than the famous German historian of the last generation, Eduard Meyer, claimed that this record in the 14th chapter of Genesis was utterly un-historic. Now the whole world of scholarship rises up to praise the record as one of amazing historical accuracy. Take, for instance, these words of Dr. Stephen L. Caiger in his work, *Bible and Spade,* published a few years ago by the Oxford University Press.

"With regard to the general situation there seems no reason to question a factual basis of Genesis 14. An invasion of Canaan by Mesopotamia was at one time deemed incredible at this early period. The excavations have proved the contrary. It is now known that from the days of Lugal-Zaggisi of Erech (c. 2900 B.C.) and Sargon of Akkad (c. 2800 B.C.) the 'Land of Amurru,' that is, of the Amorites, had been subject to such raids. Shortly before Hammurabi, Kudur-Mabug of Larsa calls himself 'Lord of Amurru,' and Hammurabi him-

self claimed that his empire extended as far as the Mediterranean. There is plenty of independent evidence, therefore, for the subjection of the Amorite kings to Elam (twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, Gen. 14), for the rebellion, and for the probability of a punitive invasion, should have rebelled."

Professor L. B. Patton, in his *Early History of Syria and Palestine* (1901, p. 35) says: "It displays a surprisingly accurate knowledge of early Babylon history. So many details could not have come down through oral tradition, but must rest upon some documentary basis."

Sir Charles Marston in his work, *The Bible Comes Alive,* dates the defeat of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah as between 2067 and 2061, when he says the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah must have taken place. He believes that the raid occurred in the first year of Hammurabi 2067 B.C.

The name Chedorlaomer will be found in any large history of the ancient world, as, for example, in the first volume of the famous monumental *Cambridge Ancient History* (page 236). So much for archaeological details.

When Abraham heard that Lot, his brother's son, had been captured, he brought together and armed his trained servants, 318 men, and in an amazingly swift and no doubt difficult pursuit, he followed them all the way to Dan in the northern extremity of Palestine, and then dividing his armed men by night into two groups, he pursued them as far as Habah, 50 miles north of Damascus and 100 miles north of Dan, and brought back "all the goods, his brother Lot and his goods, and the women also and the people."

Now, what possible lesson can a passage like this have for us? First of all, I would like to read to you some words from the only sermon I know of that was published during the nineteenth century on any verse of this chapter, a sermon by Dr. Stopford A. Brooke in his well-known volume, *The Old*

Testament and Modern Life, a sermon to which he gives the significant title "Abraham the Warrior."

"A crisis demanding action came in Abraham's life. How does the story-teller show that he met it? Did this spirit of un-self-interest make him unpractical? On the contrary; for when a man is not thinking of his self-interest, he has time to think of what is to be done for another, at what time help is to be given, or how action is to be taken. And Abraham was striking his iron within five minutes of the tidings from the valley. He met his difficulties, first by quick counsel, then by getting his folk to stand shoulder to shoulder, and then by the swiftest action, taken on the instant, and pursued without a pause until the deed was done.

"This is what delights us in the story. The spirit of human help was in Abraham, and the hand did what the spirit called for with flying ardour. For want of this speed enterprises of great pith and moment fail. For want of this sudden fire of deed, after resolute counsel has been taken, how often have we lost the good we might have done in life; how often have we failed to help men, to deliver the captives of wrong, to rescue the spoil from the cheater, to restore peace to the family or to our society, to establish our cause for the sake of man, to win the crown of saving men! We go on taking counsel till the hour is past; we delay acting till action is of no use; or we take no counsel, and, having no wise plan, break down in action; or we act alone, not having previously made trusty and faithful comrades, not having previously gained them by proving that we want nothing for ourselves. Unsupported then, having no plan, we linger in our tent, and when we do resolve to act, it is too late. The kings of the East have reached their own country; the captives are slaves; the spoil is not rescued. The opportunity is lost.

"On the contrary, at every crisis we should act like Abraham; consult quietly but at speed, knit round us all who can

act with us, and pursue day and night, with unrelaxing swiftness, till we surprise the camp where the enemy sleeps secure. The story is of actual war, and well it would be if in all our wars we had, like Nelson and a hundred other great captains, practiced the tactics of Abraham; but the lesson of his action belongs to other spheres of life than war. There is indeed no crisis in the life of the world, in our own daily life, however small it be, to which it does not apply. When you have taken counsel, when you have formed your plan—put it into form, taking all the risk, with the speed of lightning; and carry it out to the end, waiting till all is over to remember weariness. We can rest when the work is done, but not till then. Self-interest often does all this for itself; but we, who are working for others, are bound all the more to do it for them" (pp. 62–64).

Marcus Dods, in his well-known volume on Genesis in the *Expositor's Bible,* emphasizes the fruit of faith in active participation in delivering weaker brethren from tragedy.

"Can a spiritual quality like faith be of much service in rough campaigning and when the man of faith is mixed up with persons of doubtful character and unscrupulous conduct, and brought into contact with considerable political powers? Can we trace to Abram's faith any part of his action at this time? No sooner is the question put than we see that his faith in God's promise was precisely that which gave him balance and dignity, courage and generosity in dealing with the three prominent persons in the narrative. He could afford to be forgiving and generous to his grand competitor Lot, precisely because he felt sure God would deal generously with himself. He could afford to acknowledge Melchisedek and any other authority that might appear, as his superior, and he would not take advantage, even when at the head of his men eager for more fighting, of the peaceful king who came out to propitiate him, because he knew God would give

him his land without wronging other people. And he scorned the wages of the king of Sodom, holding himself to be no mercenary captain, nor indebted to any one but God. In a word, you see faith producing all that is of importance in his conduct at this time" (p. 126).

F. B. Meyer has an excellent page in which he talks about the unselfish and successful interposition of a separated man on behalf of others.

"Hidden in the configuration of the country, and confederate with his friends, Abraham had watched the movements of the devastators from afar. 'But they had not come nigh him; only with his eyes had he beheld and seen the reward of the wicked' (Psalm 91:8). Common prudence would have urged him not to embroil himself. 'Be thankful that you have escaped, and do not meddle further in the business; lest you make these mighty kings your foes.' But true separation never argues thus. Granted that the separated one is set apart for God, yet he is set apart that he may re-act more efficiently on the great world over which God yearns, and towards which He has entertained great purposes of mercy, in the election of the few. Genuine separation—an unattachedness to the things of time and sense, because of an ardent devotion to the unseen and eternal—is the result of faith, which always works by love; and this love tenderly yearns for those who are entangled in the meshes of worldliness and sin. Faith makes us independent, but not indifferent. It is enough for it to hear that its brother is taken captive; and it will arm instantly to go in pursuit.

"Ah, brothers and sisters, have there never come to you the tidings that your brothers are taken captive? How, then, is it that you have not started off long ago for their deliverance? Is this separation genuine, which stands unconcernedly by while there is such need for immediate and unselfish action?

"But Abraham's interposition was as *successful* as it was

unselfish and prompt. The force with which he set out was a very slender one; but his raw recruits moved quickly, and thus in four or five days they overtook the self-reliant and encumbered host amid the hills where the Jordan takes its rise. Adopting the tactics of a night attack, he fell suddenly on the unsuspecting host, and chased them in headlong panic, as far as the ancient city of Damascus. 'And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people' (14:16).

"Is it not always so? Then men who live the life of separation and devotion towards God, are they who act with most promptness and success when the time for action comes. Lot being in Sodom, could neither elevate its morals nor save it from attack. Abraham living among the hills is alone able to cope successfully with the might of the tyrant king. Oh, do not listen to those who say you must live on the level, and in the midst of worldly men, in order to elevate and save them; and advise you to go to the theatre, the ball-room, the public-house, in order to give them a higher tone. Did Lot save Sodom? Nor will a better fate than his befall any man, who, unbidden by God, settles down in the world for his own whim and pleasure. If you would lift me, you must stand above me. If Archimedes is to move the world, he must rest his lever on a point far enough outside the earth itself" (*Abraham,* pp. 59–61).

(It has not been my purpose here to give the latest archaeological confirmations of Genesis X, which would not lend itself to radio messages. I used the older work by Tompkins because it was more suitable for reading aloud to a radio audience.) A book I have often wished some scholar with added literary gifts would write is one on the wars of the Old Testament. A vast amount of material is available for this task.

7

A REVIEW THAT WAS DECLINED!

A REMARKABLE VOLUME AND SOME OF ITS REMARKABLE OMISSIONS

Recently there came to my hands a volume of such a comprehensive nature that anyone would at once recognize it will stand on the desk of thousands of writers, teachers, editors, and educators in this country as an indispensable work of reference for the next score of years. I refer to *The Reader's Encyclopedia,* edited by William Rose Benét, a work of 1250 double-column pages, published by the Thomas Y. Crowell Company of New York, in which are to be found approximately 18,500 articles, running, I would estimate, to about 1,250,000 words. The day that this beautifully printed volume came to my desk happened to be one in which I was interested in finding a short, comprehensive article on the Holy Grail. I turned at once to the subject in this volume, and found an article of over 600 words, tracing the tradition of the Holy Grail right down through Tennyson's *Idylls of the King,* quoting somewhat extensively from an earlier treatment of the legend, and giving references to some important recent volumes dealing with this subject.

Being a professor of English Bible, and particularly interested in Biblical themes, I began to look for articles on certain subjects which, to my astonishment, I discovered were not in the volume. I determined then to go through these 1200 pages to see what *was* said about Biblical matters, particularly about

the greatest theme to be found in the Word of God, which I name later.

Before discussing these omissions, I would like to emphasize the remarkable features of this book, and to insist that in spite of any criticism to follow, I find the book to be superior to anything of its kind with which I am acquainted. Its elaborate analyses or synopses of many of the great books of the ages is one of its outstanding features. It must have taken an enormous amount of time to collect, identify, and trace to their origin the thousands of phrases that are listed here; e.g., under the word *father* there are *90 different phrases,* each identified with some character or place, as Father Abraham, the Father of Chemistry, the Father of English Poetry, and Father of His Country (where five different characters are named, beginning with Cicero and ending with George Washington), the Father of Moral Philosophy, the Father of Poetry, the Father of Rivers, Father Thames, Father Tiber, etc. Hidden in this four-column listing of these phrases, I find this line, "Compare also I Chronicles 4:14." I must confess when I looked up the verse it was something which I had never noticed before in the Old Testament.

It is to be regretted that here and there are errors in the book; I have not tried to find them. I believe, however, that the recent fictional work of Carl Sandburg is not *Remembrance,* but *Remembrance Rock.* In the short paragraph on the "forty-niner's," it would seem to be implied that gold was discovered in California in 1849. This particular discovery of gold which led to the great rush of 1849, occurred, however, the preceding year, but due to slower methods of communication, it was not until 1849 that the rush began for the gold fields. There are a number of items I find out of place, and in consequence these are "lost." I have not tried to make a list, but *Ann Veronica* is two columns out of order, alphabetically, and the short article on the "Star-Spangled

Banner" appearing on page 1000 should be on page 1063.

Of course, each man, or each committee of editors will have a different idea of what should be included and what should be omitted, but it does seem to me that there are some very strange omissions here, of a secondary nature, in addition to the major omissions, to be mentioned later. While Jonathan Edwards, Mr. Moody, and Billy Sunday are all here, Charles G. Finney, evangelist, theologian, and college president is not here; but Charles Grandison Finney (1905–), the novelist and proofreader on the *Arizona Daily Star,* is included. Galli-Curci has a short article, but a greater singer than Galli-Curci, Jenny Lind, is not here. Robert E. Speer is given two lines, but John R. Mott is not to be found listed. A number of dictionaries and writers of dictionaries and concordances are listed, but the great *New English Dictionary,* or *Oxford English Dictionary,* and the one who did most of the early work on it, Murray, are not here. If the New York Public Library finds a place here, it seems to me that the Henry E. Huntington Library of San Marino should have mention. Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and other denominations have separate paragraphs, but the Baptists do not. Many streets famous in literature are listed, as Wall Street, LaSalle Street, Watling Street, etc., but the Wimpole Street of the Brownings is not here, and it ought to be in a *Reader's Encyclopedia.* Eve Merriam (1916–), American poet and writer of fiction, is assigned four lines, but Dr. Charles E. Merriam, after forty years of a brilliant professorship in Political Economy at the University of Chicago, and the author of over twenty well-known volumes, is not included. Philo, the famous Hebrew philosopher, for some strange reason, is omitted.

I would like to say a word about three men who certainly ought to be here, among many others—and I have not tried to make a list of famous men in our generation who should

be included. Certainly Dr. William Foxwell Albright, Professor of Semitics at Johns Hopkins University, one of the most brilliant workers in his field of this century, author of a number of notable books, and probably the most influential authority in Biblical archaeology in America today, should be here. This can also be said of Dean Luther A. Wiegle of Yale University, author of many volumes, and chairman of both the New and the Old Testament committees for the Standard Revised Version, of which the New Testament has only thus far appeared. I cannot help saying a word for one of the great scholars of America who should be here, Dr. George Sarton, Professor of the History of Science at Harvard University, and the author of what I think is generally acknowledged to be the most exhaustive, authoritative survey of scientific thought that has ever been attempted, now in process of publication, *An Introduction to the History of Science,* of which thus far five massive volumes have appeared. Dr. Sarton has been for years the editor of *Isis,* and his contributions certainly entitle him to a place in a work like this.

I had not held this volume in my hands very long before I turned to the word *Bible,* and, to my astonishment, discovered that there was *no article on the Bible.* The more one examines this volume, the more amazing appears this fact. There is a long article under the word *Bible,* extending to something over six columns, but it is devoted exclusively to the various versions of the Bible, divided into two parts, "English versions" and "Specially named editions." Under English versions appear some fifteen paragraphs on the Authorized Version, Coverdale's Bible, the Geneva Bible, Tyndale's Bible, etc.; and under "Specially named editions" appear about 25 items, including Breeches Bible, Bug Bible, Goose Bible, Leda Bible, Sacy's Bible, the Treacle Bible, the Zurich Bible, etc. But nowhere, either here or in any other

part of this great work, is there anything about the Bible as such! In fact, I do not believe from this encyclopedic work one could even reconstruct the names of the books of the Bible, though many of them have separate brief items. I am sure I could not construct from this encyclopedia the canonical arangement of the books of the most widely-read volume in the world. This does not mean that Biblical subjects are ignored; the fact is, I doubt if any encyclopedic work of this nature has been published in the English language for years that, without deliberation or planning, pays such high tribute to the Word of God as does this.

If my study of these columns is approximately exhaustive, then there are 291 separate articles, or designated sections of articles that derive specifically from the Biblical text, extending to over 47 columns of text, which would mean approximately 21,000 words. I have made a list of these, which of course cannot be duplicated here. Let me confine myself then to items appearing under the letter "H": Habakkuk, Hades, Hagar, Hallelujah, handwriting on the wall, Heaven, Herod, Herodias, high places, Holy Cross Day, the Holy Family, the Holy Ghost, Holy Land, the Holy of Holies, Holy Thursday, Holy Week, Holy Writ. When, however, one reads any of these articles, and is told that the theme derives from the Bible, and he turns to examine what the Bible might be, he will fail to find any indication in these columns; in fact, he will not even find in their alphabetical place such titles as the *Old Testament* or the *New Testament.* In addition to these some 290 articles are a great many others which derive from Biblical subjects in post-Biblical times, as e.g., Ave Maria, Feast of the Assumption, Sistine Madonna, Stabat Mater, Jesus Lover of My Soul, and scores of others. Beyond this, there must be at least 100 titles of literary works mentioned in this encyclopedia derived directly from the Scriptures. I have not tried to make a complete list of them, but

here of course must be included *Christ* and *The Fates of the Apostles,* by Cynewulf; *Genesis, Exodus, Daniel,* and other works, by Caedmon; the Biblical writings of Milton, including his epochal *Paradise Lost;* many of Byron's more famous poems, including his *Cain;* William Blake's *Jerusalem; Eden,* by Robert Bridges; John Bunyan's *Holy City;* Robert Browning's *Christmas Eve;* John Cotton's *The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; Dream of the Rood:* and Handel's musical compositions, *Esther, Saul, The Messiah,* and scores of others. But there is no article on the Bible. Now this does not mean that the Book is spoken of slightingly, rather, to the contrary. Under the word *book,* the first item to occur is the Book of Books, with the following line: "The Bible; also called simply 'the Book,' or 'the good Book.' " In describing Dante's *Divine Comedy,* we are told that it is "apart from the New Testament, the only exemplar of deeply humane and immediate relationship on every level between soul and soul." No higher praise could be asked. But we turn for the article on "the New Testament," and fail to find one. There are short notices of three or four lines on most of the books of the Old and New Testaments, but even here a number have, for a reason not stated, been omitted. Not only some of the Minor Prophets, such as Nahum, Hosea, Haggai and Zephaniah, but such an important historical character, with the book that bears his name, as Ezra, are not here, though many Biblical characters of slight importance are. For some strange reason, the book of Ezekiel is not mentioned. In the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles and Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, Ephesians and Thessalonians, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, are not hinted at; in fact, they are not even listed in the article on St. Paul. The most remarkable omission here to me is the Psalms, the most quoted book of the Old Testament. There are a few lines on the Psalter, and two lines devoted to David as psalmist; though there are brief items on

such books as Joel and Obadiah, the book of Psalms is not here.

The summaries themselves when they appear are wholly inadequate for a work like this, especially in relation to such a work as the Epistle to the Romans, where all we read is, "One of the books of the New Testament, a letter written by the Apostle Paul." When one realizes that this book had more to do with the Reformation in Europe than any other ancient volume, when we realize that reading this changed the life of Martin Luther, and the reading of Luther's preface to this epistle transformed the life of John Wesley, there should be more material under *Epistle to the Romans* for a Reader's Encyclopedia.

While neither the Old Testament, New Testament, nor Bible, are discovered as such anywhere in this volume, the lesser known divisions and Biblical commentaries of the Hebrew people *are* defined. Here we have Midrash, Torah, Gemara, Mishnah, and sixteen lines for the Talmud, but nothing for the Bible.

As far as I can discover, not one book in either the Old or New Testaments is analyzed. Approximately 290 articles in this book derive exclusively from the Biblical text, other articles derive from later treatments of Biblical subjects, scores of titles of books are taken from the Scriptures; but not one book in the Bible is analyzed. Other books *are* given extensive analysis: *The Divine Comedy* is given nearly a column; the *Aeneid* almost a column; the *Arthurian Romances,* two columns; Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga,* 75 lines. There are analyses of such works now seldom read as George Meredith's *The Egoist,* and Thackeray's *Lyndon,* and many other works of modern writers such as D. H. Lawrence and James Joyce, of which we will have more to say later. Every play of Shakespeare is analyzed, but no book of the Bible.

I would like to ask a question: Why is it that the Avesta

has an article, the Book of Mormon has an article, the Koran has an article, but the Bible, from which more of the material in this volume has been derived than from all the other sacred books combined, and multiplied by five, is not given an article? Why? In a day like this, one cannot say that it is because the Bible is so well known. An illustration of the ignorance of modern man concerning the Word of God came to me just at the close of the second World War, and it is not too old to repeat here. A student of mine took a New Testament to the post office to be mailed to her friend in Europe. The postal clerk asked what it was, and she told him the package contained a New Testament. He said, "What is that?" She replied, "It is a part of the Bible." "Why do they call it *New,*" asked the clerk, "did they just write it?" This man was forty years old, and had taken civil service examinations, or he would not have been working in the post office. This was not in Mexico, or in the extreme northern end of Alaska, but in the city of Chicago. With the Bible out of our public schools today, the next generation will know less than ever about this Book, and an encyclopedia like this certainly should carry the information which so many will not have otherwise.

But there is an even greater mystery to me in the matter of omissions than the fact that there is no article on the Bible here, and that is, *there is no article on the person Jesus Christ.* How many hundreds of biographical sketches there are in this book, I do not know. Almost everything of major significance found about Christ in the Gospels is mentioned in one article or another in this book, but though the articles refer to Christ, there is no article on Jesus Christ. Without this, so much will remain foggy and confused in the minds of modern readers. The word Angelus here is defined as "a Roman Catholic devotion in honor of the Incarnation." But what is "the Incarnation"? The Day of Annunciation is the

day "on which the angel announced to the Virgin Mary that she would be the mother of the Messiah." But what does the ordinary reader know about the life of the Messiah? *Anno Domini* is "in the year since the nativity," but of "the nativity" there is nothing in this book. There is no article for Nazarene, Saviour, Master, or Redeemer. There is a reference to Christ as the Man of Sorrows in a line, in which Isaiah 53:3 is given as a reference. (Incidentally, there will be thousands of readers of this book who will not accept the Christian interpretation of this passage, but we are glad that such an identification was made.) The mystery of such an omission grows on one when some of the words identified with the life of Christ on earth are examined. For instance, aceldama is identified as "the field purchased by the priests with the blood money thrown down by Judas," but there is no reference here to Jesus as the one whom Judas betrayed. The paragraph on Lent contains no reference to the fact that it has to do with the passion season. There is no article on the crucifixion, though a great many words in this encyclopedia take their meaning from the crucifixion. The most remarkable attempt to escape from the facts of Jesus' life is to be found in the article on Easter—22 lines, and not a single hint that Easter relates to Christ and His resurrection.

There are scores of books mentioned in this encyclopedia which derive exclusively from the gospel narratives, as, *The Nazarene,* by Sholem Asch; *The Man Nobody Knows,* by Bruce Barton; *Jesus a Myth,* by George Brandes; *Ode on the Nativity,* by Milton, and *The Messiah,* by Klopstock (mentioned three times), but the reader looks in vain for an article on the Person concerning whom these books were written. All the associates of Jesus are here in one place or another: the twelve apostles, John the Baptist, Joseph and Mary, Herod and Pontius Pilate, Lazarus and Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathaea, and Mary Magdalene. All those whose names have

become a commonplace in Western thought because of their contacts with Jesus are here, but no article on Jesus Christ. Even Nazareth is here, because it was there that "He learned the trade of a carpenter"; but when this period of a carpenter's life fell in the earthly experience of Jesus, one could never discover from these pages. Incidentally, the editor capitalizes here the pronoun *He,* and I believe elsewhere does the same, a tribute in itself to Christ as being worthy of divine honor.

While no article is given to Christ, there are articles here on other religious leaders. Mohammed is given 43 lines, and another short paragraph as The Prophet; Abdul-Baha is here; Mrs. Annie Besant is here, and Mary Baker Eddy, Madame Blavatsky, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young—they are all here, but not Jesus Christ. The gods of Greece and Rome, of India, of Egypt and ancient Babylon are all here. I find 22 of these mythical characters of the Mediterranean alone beginning with the letter "A," 40 columns. I have not tabulated these deities throughout the whole volume; but Jesus is not here. This is the more to be regretted because of the great number of books now appearing concerning this Person. Three years ago even the philosopher George Santayana felt he must write a book about Christ; the early books of Albert Schweitzer are now reappearing in widely advertised reprints; the Philosophical Library recently published a volume by Beyer, with the simple title, *Christ;* Dean Sperry of Harvard has just issued his book, *Jesus Now and Then;* the latest book of Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick is *The Man from Nazareth as His Contemporaries Saw Him;* Fulton Oursler's *The Greatest Story Ever Told* is having a phenomenal sale. A number of well-known authors are publishing books at the present time on the death of Christ, especially attacking the problem as to who crucified Jesus, but a reader of any of these volumes, turning to this encyclopedia for a brief sketch of Jesus' life would not find it. Let us consider for a moment the articles in this

volume which are wholly dependent upon the death of Christ, the last twenty-four hours of his life. Here we have aceldama, Barabbas, Caiphas, Calvary, the Cross (100 lines), Dismas (the supposed name of the thief on the cross), *ecce homo,* Golgotha, Good Friday, Holy Cross Day, Pontius Pilate, the seven words Christ spoke on the cross, and the *via dolorosa,* which together make over three columns of comment. But there is no article to tell us when this crucifixion took place, the circumstances surrounding it, and what happened immediately before and afterwards, no interpreting, summarizing article on Christ.

Even the word Christianity is not here! Bahaism is given an article, Buddhism, Theosophy, Mormonism, but not Christianity. Incidentally, I notice Christian Science is given an original paragraph of 15 lines, then 8 more lines under the word *science;* Mary Baker Eddy is given 11 lines, and then, for reasons which we can only surmise, there is an interesting ten-line addition to the article on Christian Science in the Supplement—44 lines. But nothing on Christianity. I wonder why. It certainly could not have been an accident; the book is too well edited for that. It cannot be because Christ is not important today, for the whole encyclopedia testifies on almost every page to the importance of Christ. He is never spoken of irreverently in these pages; in fact, he is recognized as a divine Person, as the one who fulfilled the Old Testament prophets. The records are never referred to as mythical. I am still wondering why there are no articles on Christ, crucifixion, resurrection, or Christianity.

Strange to say, there is no article on God. There is an article on the gods of classical mythology, of Scandinavian, Egyptian and Hindu mythology, and, as the text says, "Legends of the principal gods of various mythologies will be found under their separate names." But there is nothing here for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The awful gods are here, hideous, cruel gods, as Demogorgon, "a terrible deity whose

very name was capable of producing the most horrible effects." Daikoku, one of the seven gods of good fortune in the Japanese pantheon is here; Kali, the Hindu goddess; Ammon, the supreme king of the gods among the ancient Egyptians, and scores of other deities are here, but not God. There is a brief notice of the trinity, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but of the Father there is no article. In justice to the book, I must call attention, however, to a remarkable statement under the word *dispensation,* which I think few would ever think to consult. It reads, "The system which God chooses to dispense or establish between Himself and man," and there follows a brief notice of the dispensations of Adam, Abraham, Moses, and the Gospel. There is not only no article on God, but none on theism. Adequate mention is given of agnosticism, atheism, deism, humanism, naturalism, but one could read the whole book through without knowing that there were some who hold today, indeed millions, to a theistic view so wholly contrary to these false conceptions of God, or a denial of God.

A Bible student will be quick to discover other omissions of subjects which reappear with regular frequency in European, British and American literature. Strange to say, there is no article on "the keys of the kingdom," or, St. Peter's keys, with pictures of which the art galleries of Italy are filled. There is no article on Gethsemane, though it has become a word of deep meaning in our language, nor on the gates of Hades, the crown of thorns, the widow's mite, the Rock of Ages. There is also no article here on Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is here, but not the Jerusalem of Palestine, which, incidentally, is given great space even in the columns of our *Congressional Record* at the present time. The Holy City is here, and the City of God with two lines, but nothing on Jerusalem as such. LaSalle and Wall Street, Pennsylvania Avenue are here, Patmos and Acre, Versailles and Venus, Ludgate and

Fleet Street, Lido and Majorca, but not Jerusalem, though Babylon is.

Finally, what I miss here are notices of that most neglected group of scholars and writers in contemporary thought—I refer to church historians, theologians, and Biblical commentators of the first rank. The *Cambridge History of American Literature* felt justified in giving pages to Charles Hodge of Princeton (1797–1878) and to his great *Systematic Theology,* which, it said, was written in the style that reminded one of John Milton. Hodge is not here, though his works have been studied, mastered, and (after digestion) rewritten and preached again by thousands of ministers in the last half-century. His great contemporaries and successors, George P. Fisher, W. G. T. Shedd, Augustus Hopkins Strong, and B. B. Warfield, are all omitted, though they have influenced the thinking and writings of a great multitude. Even Matthew Henry is not included, whose Bible commentary has sold more extensively than that of any one Biblical writer since the Reformation. Certainly Canon Liddon should be here, and A. M. Fairbairn, who wrote so brilliantly in the *Cambridge History* series. Canon Farrar should be here, and Sir William Ramsay (1851–1939). The greatest scholar of the days of the Puritans, John Owen (1616–1683) ought not to be omitted, nor Bishop Westcott, who had so much to do with the Revised Version, and the Westcott and Hort *Greek Text of the New Testament.*

I am, of course, more interested in what is done with the Bible and with the person of Christ in this encyclopedia than in any other one particular subject, but I was surprised, as are many others, at the unusually large space proportionately given to modern authors, especially one, D. H. Lawrence, who is given practically as much space as Shakespeare. T. S. Eliot is given over a column, but his most famous poem, *The Waste Land,* is assigned three columns, as much space as is given to

nine of Shakespeare's tragedies! Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain,* and Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* are each given as much space as *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* together. But the most startling phenomena of all is the attention given to James Joyce and his writings. I find that to *Finnegans' Wake,* and six characters appearing in it, each of which has a separate article, there are almost six columns of criticism and interpretation. For James Joyce himself, and all of his writings, 23 articles are assigned, embracing something over thirteen columns of material. In other words, James Joyce and his writings are given more space in this volume than is assigned to Shakespeare and all of his eleven tragedies! Fifty years ago a *Reader's Encyclopedia* could not have included the writers we have just mentioned, and others also given considerable space; fifty years from now those who are assigned such large proportionate sections will be replaced by other subsequent authors who catch the attention of later literary critics. I could not help but think as I looked at these articles, "How have the mighty fallen?" When I was in college, Romain Rolland's *Jean Christophe* was being discussed on every campus; Benét gives the work seventeen lines. *Hedda Gabler* was in every anthology devoted to modern drama, but here Ibsen's work is assigned 14 lines, Gerhart Hauptmann's *Sunken Bell,* 15 lines, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* by this title cannot be found. Fifty years from now, Shakespeare and Goethe, Homer and Vergil will still be given large space in any encyclopedia on literature, but certainly there will not be so much space given to Joyce, Proust, Kafka, Lawrence, and T. S. Eliot.

After all said in criticism of this volume, however, it will still remain for some years to come an indispensable desk book frequently consulted by everyone who is seeking accuracy in his writing and looking for information concerning the well-known or the obscure in literary works of the centuries.

8

SOME LESSER-KNOWN PAGES FROM DR. ALEXANDER WHYTE

All ministers who read and love books are acquainted, of course, with those six inimitable volumes of Scriptural biography, *Bible Characters,* by that peer of all Scotch preachers of a former generation, Dr. Alexander Whyte of Free St. George's, Edinburgh. I would not dare to quote a line from any of these masterly biographical sketches, but some of his other works have not had as wide a circulation in this country as one would wish, and if in this chapter I can stir up a few of my younger friends in the ministry to gather to themselves everything that Whyte has ever written which they can secure, I would be indeed delighted, and I would know that they in turn were being daily refreshed.

At the end of his chapter, "Dr. Whyte in Study and Pulpit," in the thrilling life of Alexander Whyte by Dr. G. F. Barbour, is the most remarkable illustration of a phrase too-quickly passed over in the Minor Prophets, "He delighteth in mercy." No comment is necessary on the following words: "There was a special note of sympathy in his preaching to people with whom life had dealt hardly. Not that he was ignorant of the temptations and sins of the mean streets in the cities or of secluded country places. But there was less of sternness than sometimes in his own pulpit; and the smile of rapturous contemplation broke more often over his features, as his imagination took wing, and for a short space the material surroundings of his hearers fell away into forgetfulness, as they caught some reflection of the preacher's vision of the

consummated and triumphant 'Joy of his Lord.' Of these sermons, none was more memorable than that on 'Who is a God like unto Thee?' In its course, the preacher used to tell of an incident which occurred at the end of Dr. John Carment's life. Dr. Whyte had occasion to call on business at the office of his friend, who was then far over eighty years of age. After their business was completed, the noble old lawyer thrust his papers and writing materials on one side, and looking straight across the cleared desk at his visitor, said with great intensity, 'Have ye any word for an old sinner?' Dr. Whyte described his amazement at the abrupt question, coming from one whom he revered as a saint on the very verge of glory. For a moment he was too nonplussed to answer; but then the words came into his heart which he had given to one and another in the course of his visiting that afternoon, and he stammered out, 'He delighteth in mercy'—and so took his leave. Next morning he received a letter from Dr. Carment, telling that he had been passing through a season of profound inward darkness, but that the four words left with him by his friend had sent a flood of light into his spirit. The light never again faded until, a very few days later, he passed into the perfect day."

In 1893, Whyte had delivered an address on "The Preparation of a Preacher," from words taken from the second and third chapters of Ezekiel, "Open thy mouth and eat what I give thee. And when I looked, behold, a hand was sent unto me; and lo, a roll of a book was therein," etc. Whyte is at his best here in speaking of the relationship of a minister to his books. A summary of this message appeared in *The Contemporary Pulpit,* 2nd series, Vol. IX, January–June, 1893, pp. 373–376, and because this particular volume is quite scarce, and, as far as I know, the words were never reprinted in any more popular volume of Whyte, I am glad to take this opportunity of placing them before my readers:

"I. We see in this symbolical scene God's own immediate way of making a minister. A Book has a great deal to do with salvation. Salvation lies wrapped up in a Book. Who is able to taste all the flavours, sweet and pungent, of that Book? Who is able to assimilate that heavenly Book, and make it bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh? Who shall receive it into his own soul? 'Go *thou* and take the heavenly book,' said the heavenly voice. This is said and done every day among ourselves. Here is the Book, and there are the people, and some one amongst them is to take the Book and speak its message to others. 'Go *thou,*' says the Spirit to some soul. The call of God to the ministry is less a call than an absolute compulsion —an inward constraint which we cannot resist. The man who hears this Divine call must give up his whole life to that Book. And unless this inward compulsion compels a man, unless a voice as clear as that St. John heard at Patmos call him, in the name of God let not that man take the Book. Let him stop in time, and turn back, in case he make shipwreck of his life and stain his soul with the blood of his fellows.

"II. Take the book, and eat it. Note that it is not, 'Take the book, and read it,' nor yet, 'and send it to the seven Churches,' but it is 'and eat it.' The fashion of today says we must interpret the Bible as we do any other book. But that is not the rule with the Apostle John. The book is to be eaten, for it is not an ordinary book. It will be sweet in the mouth, and bitter in the belly. This is the universal, necessary thing to say about God's Book. Ezekiel and Daniel found it so in their experience. Job, outside of Israel, found it so, 'Thy word has been more than my ordinary food.' This man Job deserves a whole book of the Bible to himself—the scattered morsels of God's will be gathered anywhere. Noble soul! a heathen man, but yet high up among God's saints. Let us all learn to put off our meal of ephemeral words of man, whilst we read God's Book. Eat it for your first food every morning.

See that all its strength and sweetness fills you before any other food.

"III. What does this mean?—'It shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey, but it shall make thy belly bitter.' The only way to find out what it means is to eat the same roll ourselves. Eat the book, and tell us what takes place. I will tell you what will happen. This Word of God will be as sweet as honey, 'sweeter than the honey comb.' Yes, the grace and mercy of God are always passing sweet to the genuine sinner. That is the daily sweet experience of those who make it their earliest and most necessary food. When in the inward parts, a guilty conscience, a sin-laden heart, ah me! then there is new bitterness indeed. With a new sense of sin there is a new bitterness, compared to which Marah is milk and honey.

"God's word taken and eaten long enough may turn you into God's sacrificing priest. A priest has much to do with sin; he has his own sins, and the sins of others in addition, lying on his soul. Priests' eyes are full of sin, they see so much of sin. Other men have other eyes, other tastes, and see things sweet, fair and beautiful. Scarce ever was there a priest who did not taste of this bitterness; but there is a compensating sweetness which is all his own. Every true minister has a sensibility to sin and to grace—a palate in the heart both for sweetness and bitterness. This sensibility makes him the only true successor of prophets. Jehovah says, 'Take it, and eat it up.' Observe this solemnly, and humbly and teachably 'eat it up.' We are not allowed to pick and choose. We are not allowed to choose the sweet and reject the bitter, but we are to admit the whole Bible. We have all our favourite chapters, but these may not be best for us. Salvation is not shut up in any one book, nor is it shut up in any one creed. It is spiritual manhood to acknowledge this. We must not be sectarian, or censorious, or one-sided, but we must preach the whole Bible,

the large-hearted, brotherly Bible. The end of all this preaching is to secure that the whole word of God shall enter your heart, and work salvation there."

I do not think it would be of any advantage to quote from the long chapter, but in his book, *The Nature of Angels* (London, 1930), Whyte devotes the second chapter, 55 pages in length, to "The Daemon of Socrates," and if anyone is interested in this problem of Platonism, he would find himself well repaid in consulting these pages.

I am sure that a number of my readers have Whyte's great work on prayer, *Lord, Teach Us to Pray,* in their libraries. Even if they do, it may be they have not read this sermon, and whether they have or not, I could never write a chapter on Alexander Whyte without including those two graphic pages —the result of his superb imaginative powers—on the friend who came to one at midnight asking for bread for an unexpected guest, and was heard for his importunity. Who can forget the picture Whyte draws of this man pounding at the door at midnight:

" 'Importunity,'—'because of his importunity,'—does not do justice to our Lord's style,—to call it style. What our Lord said was far more to the purpose than 'importunity,' excellent as that is. What He said was 'shamelessness.' This was what our Lord really said: 'I say unto you,' He said, 'though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his shamelessness he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.' 'Think shame!' the man cried out, who was in bed, with his door shut. 'Think shame!' the disturbed neighbours cried out. 'Think shame!' the late passers-by said. 'Hold your peace,' they said, 'and let honest men's doors alone at this time of night.' 'Never mind,' said our Lord on the other hand. 'Never you mind them: they have bread enough at home: and easy for them to cry shame to a starving man.

Never you mind, knock you on. I have been in your place Myself, till they said that I was beside Myself. Knock you on: and I will stand beside you till I see the door open. He must rise if you go on knocking. Give him no rest. Well done! Knock again!' Yes,—shamelessness! 'What a shameless wretch I am!' you will say about yourself, 'to ask such things, to have to ask such things at my age: to knock so loud after the way I have neglected prayer, and neglected and forgotten the Hearer of prayer.' 'At my age,'—you will number your days and will blush with shame,—'at my age, and only beginning to pray in any earnest! How many nights have I had no time to give to God! And, now, to expect that when I lift up my finger, and go down five minutes on my carpeted knees, God Almighty is to hasten and set everything aside to hear me!' Yes: you are right: it needs some forehead: it needs some face: it needs, as Christ says, some 'shamelessness' in you and me to come in that manner and for these things at midnight. Yes,—it is this that so increases and so aggravates the shamelessness of your case. The shameful things you have to ask for. The disgraceful—the incredible things you have to admit and confess. The life you have lived. The way you have spent your days and nights. And what all that has brought you to. It kills you to have to say such things even with your door shut. Yes,—but better say all these things in closets than have them all proclaimed from the housetops of the day of judgment. Knock, man! Knock for the love of God! Knock as they knock to get into heaven after the door is shut! Knock, as they knock to get out of hell!

"And then,—oh! what an experience it is, what a more than heavenly joy it is, when the door is at last opened, and the loaves are handed out! What an indescribable feeling is that in our hearts, when, after years of neglected prayer, followed with midnight after midnight of importunity and agony, light begins to break through: and God's hand is

reached out, and our souls taste the strength and the sweetness of the Bread from heaven. Jacob does not feel his thigh any more. David's couch, wet with his tears, is all answered now. The bloody sweat of Gethsemane itself is all forgotten now."

The most moving autobiographical passage on prayer that I have ever read, a passage which on its first reading wrote itself indelibly into my mind, so that I never had to read it again, but have often repeated, is found in Alexander Whyte's volume, *Thomas Shepard, Pilgrim Father and Founder of Harvard, His Spiritual Experience and Experimental Preaching* (Edinburgh, 1909). (My own copy has the signature of the great Whyte himself, dated March, 1910.) I have often thought that probably outside of his *Walk, Conversation, and Character of Jesus Christ Our Lord,* this is the richest volume Whyte ever wrote. He is talking about intercessory prayer when he bursts out with this confession:

"I wonder if I can venture to tell you what is in my mind about intercessory prayer at this moment. I wonder if I dare tell you, I wonder if it would be wise to speak, as I feel compelled to speak, to such a mixed multitude as you are. Yes I will venture and will risk. For I am debtor to all the devout and serious-minded people among you with a debt I can never fully discharge. And then, who knows, but it may be the same with some of you some day as it was with me. Well, a dear friend of mine was sick and was seemingly nigh unto death. And I was much in prayer for him that he might be spared to his family and to his friends and to his great work. And one night as I was in that intercessory prayer a Voice suddenly spake and said to me—'Are you in real earnest in what you ask? Or are you uttering, as usual, so many of your idle words in this solemn matter? Now to prove the sincerity and the integrity of your love for your friend, and to seal the truth of what you say about the value of his life, will you give Me and yourself a solid proof that you are in real earnest in what

you say?' 'What is the proof?' I asked, all trembling, and without looking up. And the Voice said, 'Will you consent to transfer to your sick friend the half of your remaining years? Suppose you have two more years to live and work yourself, will you give over one of them to your friend? Or if you have ten years yet before you, will you let your friend have five of them?' I sprang to my feet in a torrent of sweat. It was a kind of garden of Gethsemane to me. But, like Gethsemane, I got strength to say, 'Let it be as Thou hast said. Thy will be done. Not my will but Thine be done.' Till I lay down that never-to-be-forgotten night with a clean heart and a good conscience as never before both toward God and toward my much-talented friend. How the matter is to end I know not. How the case is to work out I cannot tell. Enough for me and for you that my story is true and is no idle tale."

Earlier in this volume Whyte talks about the coldness of our hearts in praying. He must have battled through all the evil forces that would keep us from our knees again and again, but he found victory. "Well, at bottom and to begin with, there is some absolutely unaccountable alienation of our sinful hearts away from our Maker and our Redeemer. There is some utterly inexplicable estrangement from God that has, somehow, taken possession of your heart and mine. There is some dark mystery of iniquity here that has never yet been sufficiently cleared up. There is some awful 'enmity against God,' as the Holy Ghost has it: some awful malice that sometimes makes us hate the very thought of God. We hate God, indeed, much more than we love ourselves. For we knowingly endanger our immortal souls; every day and every night we risk death and hell itself rather than come close to God and abide in secret prayer. This is the spiritual suicide that we could not have believed possible had we not discovered it in our own atheistical hearts. The thing is far

too fearful to put into words. But put into words for once, this is what our everyday actions say concerning us in this supreme matter of prayer. 'No; not tonight,' we say, 'I do not need to pray tonight. I am really very well tonight. My heart is much steadier in its beats tonight. And besides I have business on my hands that will take up all my time tonight. I have quite a pile of unanswered letters on my table tonight. And before I sleep I have the novel of the season to finish, for I must send it back tomorrow morning. And besides, there is no such hurry as all that. I am not so old nor so frail as all that. Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.' "

I cannot help but quote once again from this golden volume. He is talking on what makes the perfect theologian, and soon after his introduction, he says: "It is the heart that makes the true exegete; that is to say the true expositor, the true annotator, and the true commentator on the word of God. A Hebrew scholar can read the Hebrew Old Testament, and a Greek scholar can read the Greek New Testament, and an English scholar can read the whole English Bible. But the best reader of both the Old and the New Testament is the man who brings his whole heart to bear upon the book of God. The eye sees that only which it brings the power to see. And the mind reads only what it brings the power to read. And then the heart both sees and reads and feels what it alone has the power to see and to read and feel. And that is the love of God as that love is written, as with a sunbeam, on every page of the Divine Book. God had His own Book written for us out of his own heart, and the more of God's heart any man has in himself, the better able will that man be to read for himself, and to draw out for other men, the whole mind and the whole heart of God from the Book of God. As face answers to face in water, so does the heart of God answer to the heart of man; and, again, so does the heart

of man answer to the heart of God in the sacred writings. In other words, it is the heart that makes the truest and every-way the best expositor of the word of God and the best annotator thereupon."

Let me close this chapter with a marvelous interpretation of that line in Revelation 7:14, "These are they which came out of great tribulation." It is from a sermon, which I think has never been reprinted, that Whyte preached in Dudhope United Free Church, Dundee, one of the evicted churches under the judgment of the House of Lords, as a result of which, the congregation met for public worship in a disused mill. Whyte entitled his sermon, "In Great Tribulation: To an Evicted Church." It appeared in *The Christian World Pulpit,* June 21, 1905:

"The tribulations of that day were great persecutions. We have had our share of it in Scotland. The hills and valleys of Scotland could tell a great and glorious story of how God by His tribulations, the way He permitted men to persecute the Church of Christ, has purified the Church. Scotland has sent up a great number of those who had gone through great tribulation, washing their robes and making them whiter than snow. You have been through tribulations in this house and congregation. But think of the tribulations your fathers passed through. Think of the dragoons surrounding this congregation this evening. No man dare make you afraid here. You are sitting down, you and your children, in perfect peace, but the time was when no man might know what might happen before the communion table came to an end or the public worship. You have your own tribulations, but these are not so heart-breaking, so full of soreness and sickness of spirit as was that great discipline through which God passed our fathers.

"Tribulation means trouble sanctified, trouble of which a

man is the better; trouble of which he can say with David in the Psalms, 'It was good for me to be afflicted that I might learn Thy holy statutes.' I had gone astray like a lost sheep, but by my afflictions I was brought back to God. You are yourselves witnesses in your own business and domestic life, you are witnesses to God, and the affliction when it is sanctified becomes a great and eminent means of grace. Every family can tell that story. I see many sitting before me with the weeds of mourning and bereavement: they can tell that story. They say, 'It was sore to flesh and blood to lose for this life those dearer to us than our own life, but it has brought me near to God.' I had once a young communicant, a young gentleman in the congregation that used to be oftener on the Sabbath afternoon with a cigar in his mouth and a can in his hand than at the worship of God. I was astonished when he came offering himself for a young communicant—I may not have been able to hide my astonishment when I put the question to him what led him to think of this—he gave me a very short answer. 'Sir, I was engaged to be married and she died.' And he told me no more. I could shake hands with him. God's dealing with him and the discipline given to his salvation had taken him and her in order to make them both as we believe sheaves of righteousness, the wheat of His garner in His heavenly kingdom. 'I was engaged to be married and she died,' and that was his tribulation, the history of his conversion, and sitting down at his Lord's table. I asked a servant girl from the country what led her to come up. She said, 'I had a very happy home, but my father died, and there were some younger children. I had to go and do something to send my wages back to my widowed mother. I was very unhappy in such and such a Crescent in Edinburgh. They were very unkind to me downstairs. I went when my heart was breaking, and I asked my mistress if I would get

out to the prayer meeting. That evening the congregation stood up and sang:

'The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of heaven breaks.'

And she said, 'Before we got to the end of the hymn I felt I could go home and go through any tribulation it seemed good to God to send upon me, if at last I might stand clothed among the sanctified with a white robe and a palm in my hand.' I did not need to argue with my session long when I proposed these two candidates. 'Sir, I was engaged to be married,' and the other, 'I was very unhappy in the house I was in. I came to the prayer meeting and went back strengthened to bear whatever God saw I needed.' These are they and they are here, these are they, if I knew their life-story as their minister knows it, these are they which are coming through great tribulation, washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb, and making ready among the services and discipline of His grace here for the rest and blessedness of that heavenly city.

"What are these which are arrayed in white robes and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore they are there. That is the hinge of the Divine logic; therefore they are there. It is a piece of Divine reasoning, of Divine exposition: therefore they are there. How am I to get there? Look how they shine in their grace and glory. How are you and I to get there? How are they there? By what means did they get there? By their sufferings being sanctified and by their bringing their sins to the blood of Christ. That is the secret of it. Is your trouble being sanctified? Are you a better man or a better woman because of the trouble that has come to you? Has your trouble become tribulation, and have you got nearer to God

and more helpful to your neighbour because you have come through suffering, and have you done away with the sins of temper and of life, washing your nature and your conscience clean in the fountain opened for sin? These are the two wheels upon which your salvation hangs. Not because they always kept their garments clean, but being in great trouble their trouble was sanctified, and having great stains on their garments they washed them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are there."

9

MILLINGTON'S TESTIMONY OF THE HEATHEN TO THE TRUTHS OF HOLY WRIT

In 1878 there was published in Edinburgh a book by Dr. Craufurd Tait Ramage entitled *Bible Echoes in Ancient Classics,* in the preface of which the author says, "I am not aware that any complete work of this kind has ever appeared." This is quite amazing from one who had such a thorough acquaintance with the literature of a number of languages as the titles of some of his other works inform us, because just fifteen years before, in the city of London, the most exhaustive work on this subject probably ever produced came from the press, *The Testimony of the Heathen to the Truths of Holy Writ,* by the Rev. Thomas S. Millington, of whom I know almost nothing except what the title page tells, that he was an incumbent of Woodhouse Eaves. The *British Museum Catalogue* informs us Millington issued an anthology in 1851 with the title *Twelve Sermons Preached A.D. 1620–1650 by Eminent Divines of the Church of England,* a book which I myself have never seen. In 1868 he published a work *Sermons on the Lord's Prayer,* and in 1873 a volume which probably came out of the one which we are about to discuss, *Signs and Wonders in the Land of Ham—A Description of the Ten Plagues of Egypt with Ancient and Modern Parallel Illustrations.*

The sub-title of Millington's book gives us actually the objective he had before him, "A commentary on the Old and New Testaments, compiled almost exclusively from Greek and Latin authors of the classical ages of antiquity." Before examining Millington's book a little carefully we might com-

pare the two volumes we have just mentioned. The earlier one, by Millington, measures 10½ by 7 inches, and contains 679 pages including 16 pages of brief biographical descriptions of the authors he quotes, 48 Greek writers and 23 Latin writers. The work by Ramage is in size just about half of the Millington volume with only two-thirds as many pages. In two ways the latter book is superior. All the material is given first in the original language, either Greek or Latin, and is then followed by an English translation. While Millington draws upon 71 ancient authors, Ramage quotes from 148.

Millington has quite a remarkable essay on the significance of these classic passages from which I think it might be profitable to quote a few of his arguments. Personally, I cannot go *all* the way with Millington in his first statement that, "it is evident that the greater part of the knowledge possessed by the heathen was obtained either by tradition, or by more direct communication, from the written word of God. The moon shines with a borrowed light, and the alternations which she undergoes serve to indicate the source from whence her lustre is derived. The more directly her face is turned to the greater luminary, the more clearly and completely it is lighted up. So, in the history, philosophy, and ethics of the Gentiles we may discern the reflected light of divine revelation. The facts are, it is true, greatly disguised, and the doctrine much obscured, by the fallacies of human reason and invention; but as the shadow, though distorted, bears still an unequivocal resemblance to the object which it represents, so these traditions afford sure testimony to the realities which they so feebly and imperfectly reflect."

Whenever our author claims that such classical references help us to interpret the prophecies of the Scriptures he is wrong. "The value of the particular kind of testimony offered in the following work is particularly noticeable in its application to prophecy. The events foretold by the holy prophets

are shewn, by the matter-of-fact accounts of heathen writers, who had never heard of their predictions, to have been fulfilled; and that not in a general sense, which might be ascribed to accident, but in all their circumstances and with the greatest accuracy and minuteness. But for the histories bequeathed to us by Herodotus, Xenophon, Diodorus, Livy, and Tacitus, we should never have known how fully the events foretold by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the so-called minor prophets, have been accomplished. We might have been still looking for the fulfilment of these prophecies, or even have been tempted, on account of their apparent failure, to doubt their authenticity and inspiration."

Furthermore, says our author, "They give us an insight into the thoughts, tastes, and habits of the ancients, and enable us to appreciate more fully the style and language of the inspired penmen, by a more intimate acquaintance with those to whom their writings were addressed. At the same time it will be evident to all who take the trouble to compare them, even through the imperfect medium of a translation, that in dignity of thought and expression, in boldness and felicity of description, in the solemn grandeur of their periods, in their lofty flights of poetic imagery, and their touching depths of pathos, the compositions of those holy men of old who "wrote as they were moved by the Spirit of God," are as far above all human productions as heaven itself is above earth. He concludes by answering those who insist that using such parallels is derogatory to the sacred claims of scripture. He justifies this form of research by reminding us of Paul's use of the Greek poets in Acts 17:28.

When we open the volume we discover, for example, that Millington has eight crowded pages on the creation story of Genesis 1—two pages are devoted to Genesis 1:1 alone. We might compare here the material gathered by Millington and by Ramage on Genesis 1:2, "And the earth was waste and

void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Both quote from a hymn of Orpheus, both from Ovid, and both from Euripides, but Millington uses material from Homer, Strabo, Plutarch and Cicero not found in Ramage, while Ramage quotes two passages from Seneca among others which are not in Millington, for instance, "I invoke the spirits of the dead, and you gods of the lower regions, and dark Chaos, and the gloomy mansion of the shady Pluto." This quotation illustrates what we find often in the passages of both of these works, namely, that the quotations are not exact parallels but simply contain fragments of the scripture statement. The other quotation from Seneca is better, "Chaos is with eternal night."

In anticipation of his later work Millington devotes nine pages to the plagues of Exodus 7–11, whereas Ramage gives no attention to this subject whatever. Millington quotes in full the account of the capture of Babylon by Cyrus from Zenophon under Daniel 5:31, but Ramage does not refer to it. In both of these works is an excellent arrangement of material on Acts 17.

At times one single verse has gathered to it scores of passages relating more or less to the fundamental idea of the verse, as for example, II Timothy 1:10, "but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," is followed by 28 pages from Greek and Latin authors on the immortality of the soul. I think my readers might be interested in having before them perhaps one complete passage from Millington on a given text. We will take II Peter 3:12, "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." (I am giving the references exactly as they occur in Millington.)

"A raging fire shall devour all things earthly and above."—Soph. apud Justin. Mart.

The stoics believed in successive conflagrations at destined periods, at which time all beings were re-absorbed into the deity.

"If merely being alone is sufficient for solitude, Jupiter may be said to be solitary at the time of the conflagration."—Epict. l. III c. 13.

"When the conflagration shall take place, Jupiter, of all the gods, being alone incorruptible, will then remain."—Plut. adv. Stoic. c. 36.

"Heraclitus said: All things are formed of fire, and all things shall be converted into fire again."—Ibid. de Ei apud Delph. C. 8.

"Heraclitus used to discourse much concerning the conflagration of the world."—M. Anton. l. III. c. 3.

"Coming events in futurity are extremely lamentable; I mean the general conflagration which will consume the universe."—Lucian. Vitar. auct. c. 13.

"The stoics say that principles and elements differ from each other: for that principles had no generation or beginning, and will have no end; but that elements will be destroyed by the operation of fire."—Diog. Laert. Zeno. c. 68.

"First cast an eye,
And look on all below, on all on high;
The solid earth, the seas, and arched sky:
One hour, one fatal hour must ruin all:
This glorious frame, that stood so long, must fall."
—Lucr. dr rer. nat. l. v. v. 96.

"The sky
And all that is or can be framed on high
Is mortal, once was made and once must die."
—Ibid. l. vi. v. 42.

"We stoics conclude, which Panaetius is said to have doubted of, that the whole world at last will be consumed by a general conflagration; when all moisture being exhausted, neither the earth can have any nourishment, nor the air return again—since water, of which it is formed, will then be all consumed."—Cic. de nat. deor. l. II. c. 46.

"From the contemplation of nature, men anticipate things to come,—as deluges of water, and the future deflagration, at some time or other, of heaven and earth."—Ibid. de divin. l. I. c. 50.

"It will happen that some day or other all this world will be burnt up with fire."—Cic. Quoest. Academ. c. 37.

Jove—

> "Remembered in the fates a time, when fire
> Should to the battlements of heaven aspire,
> And all his blazing worlds above should burn,
> And all the inferior globe to cinders turn."
> —Ov. Metam. l. I. v. 256.

> "So shall one hour at last this globe controul,
> Break up the vast machine, dissolve the whole,
> And time no more through measured ages roll.
> The chaos hoar, shall seize his former right,
> And reign with anarchy and eldest night:
> The starry lamps shall combat in the sky,
> And lost and blended in each other, die:
> Quench'd in the deep the heavenly fires shall fall,
> And oceans, cast abroad, o'erspread the ball:
> The moon no more her well-known course shall run,
> But rise from western waves and meet the sun:
> Confusion wild shall all around be hurl'd,
> And discord and disorder tear the world."
> —Lucan. Phars. l. I. v. 72.

"It really exceeds all other wonders that one single day should pass without everything being consumed; especially when we reflect that concave mirrors placed opposite the

sun's rays produce flames most readily, and that numerous small but natural fires abound everywhere *in the earth.*"—Plin. Hist. nat. l. II. c. III.

As one turns these pages hour after hour looking for parallels to this verse and that he will not be long in discovering the fact that the truths of the Christian faith that derive from Christ are *not* paralleled in the ancient classics. There cannot be any parallels to the crucifixion of Christ as Saviour. There is no parallel from any historic records of the resurrection of our Lord. There is nothing to be found in the ancient classics to even hint that our sins are to be washed away with the blood shed by the only begotten Son of God. There are no *real* prophecies here, only some frequent ambiguous mumblings of the oracles, of course, but no prophecies such as are interwoven through the Scriptures. Even in the material of creation the nobility, the beauty, the profundity, and the order of the Genesis account are all notably missing in Babylonian and later so-called parallels.

This chapter might well be concluded with a reference to a work published in this country by one of our most distinguished bishops, Dr. William Meade, the Bishop of Virginia, between the volume by Millington and the one by Ramage. Regarding this book, *The Bible and the Classics* (a new edition of the work, New York, 1890, extends to 558 pages), the Bishop hoped it would have a vast circulation; in fact, he expected it might be adopted as a textbook in schools and colleges, to meet the currents of agnosticism and skepticism that were then showing themselves in considerable strength, especially in the universities of the north. In this he was greatly disappointed. The book has never had a wide circulation. It treats the matter of the classics differently from the two volumes we have just discussed. It is not arranged according to Biblical texts, but according to subjects, of which there are about thirty, in forty chapters. There are chapters

on creation, on the temptation in the Garden of Eden, the death of Abel, the progress of idolatry, three chapters on the deluge, etc. Then some space is devoted to the pagan religions of various countries. He then goes back to the classics and gives chapters on Homer, Hesiod, Ovid, Vergil, etc., concluding with two chapters, one on the heathen oracles and one on the superiority of the Bible to all other books. With the text are interwoven not only some very revealing quotations from the ancient classics, but also some important statements on the church fathers, and some references to later literature.

I am not going into details but there is a footnote at the bottom of page 528 which one might do well to carefully investigate. He quotes Porphyry as saying, "Since Jesus began to be worshipped, no man has received any public help or benefit from the gods," and then he very suggestively hints at a reason for this which was confessed by all the learned heathen, quoting the words of our Lord, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," as though when Jesus came a death blow was dealt the whole world of pagan idolatry and the whole pantheon of Greek and Roman deities. Of course, this is the theme worked out in Milton's magnificent ode, "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," and is confessed in the very title of one of Plutarch's most famous essays, "The Obsolescence of the Oracles."

10

ON FINDING BOOKS AND A WORD ABOUT THE BOOKS WE MIGHT TRY TO FIND

Logically a chapter with such a title as this should be begun with a discussion of what books one should look for and then where to find the books. But here I am going to reverse this order. As to *what* books one should look for, each will have a different idea; some books one would want a hundred others would not care for at all. But on finding books and hunting for books, the same principles prevail for us all. One adds books to one's library either by going out after them personally, by mail, et cetera, or (which does not often happen probably), by books coming to us. Of the latter, I must say more shortly. What I am now going to say is platitudinous indeed: To find books that we want, *one must go where books are seen and sold,* or, keep everlastingly reading book catalogues as they appear—rare books, second-hand books, new books, and of course by sending one's needs to book sellers throughout the land. This matter of going where books are sold is exceedingly important. If one has a real love for books, the first thing he does when he alights from a train in any large city with a few hours to wait will be to go directly to the street on which the second-hand bookstores are to be found.

While it is true that probably one cannot find today, as some years ago, quite as many treasures in a given afternoon in visiting the bookstores of any particular city, still wonderful things do turn up, and sometimes in a most unexpected hour or place. While at Mt. Hermon, California, this last summer at a Bible Conference, I was driven over to San Jose

by my good friend, for many years the city manager of that city, Mr. Clarence E. Goodwin, to look up something in the public library pertaining to a subject I was writing about. When we came near to the city I asked him if there was a second-hand bookstore there. He said yes, there was, possibly not too important, but we could stop and see what they had. What they did have was worth the entire trip. There I found a title which one almost never sees in a second-hand book catalogue, the second edition, London, Macmillan, 1927, of the two-volume work, by that distinguished British Jewish scholar, C. G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels, Edited, With an Introduction and Commentary*. In these twelve hundred pages one finds everything important that modern Judaism has to say about every event and address in the life of Christ. And it was marked at $3.00! Two days later I drove over to Palo Alto to show some friends the beauties of Leland Stanford University, and what should I find in the College Bookstore there but a volume which I think has not been for sale anywhere, as far as I know, in the last twenty years, Sir William Mitchell Ramsay's epochal work of 1890, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, a volume of five hundred pages with glorious folding maps, tables, et cetera. It seems that since the volume has come into my hands I have seen at least forty references to its pages. Though I have read after Ramsay for years I had never before known the tragic history connected with this book, and I must place this story before my readers: "The Royal Geographical Society, which had liberally helped the Asia Minor Exploration Fund, required from me a contribution; and from the effort to make the lecture worthy of the audience this book has grown. In May 1886 the first sketch of it was read before the Society. The difficulty of the subject, and the distraction caused by other work both as a Professor (first in Oxford and afterwards in Aberdeen), and as a traveller (I left London for

Smyrna the day after reading the paper, and spent considerable part of the summer of 1886, 1887, and 1888 in Asia Minor), delayed the completion and publication of the sketch. In the beginning of April, 1888, I brought the complete MS. with me to London to hand over to the printer. I discovered, thirty-six hours after starting from Aberdeen, that the manuscript was no longer in the bag where I had placed it, and which had been for most of the time close to my hand, and I have never found the slightest clue to the time or manner of its loss (I have no other reason to suspect myself of somnambulism). At that time the manuscript was about as long as Part I of the present work. I have found it impossible to rewrite the paper in its original form. All notes for it had been destroyed, and when, after months spent partly in travel and partly in despair, I began to rewrite it, the task proved impossible. The literary form, which it had been my ambition to give to my treatment of the subject, could not be recovered; not merely had I no time and no heart to go through the work of writing and rewriting, but also I had lost in residence at home the inspiration that formerly arose from intimate familiarity with and love of the country and the scenery. I have therefore worked into Part I everything that I could recollect of the lost paper; and I have added in Part II my collection of material for the history and antiquities of the country, so far as it has any bearing on geography and seems to be new."

Some of the choicest treasures of Biblical and theological literature are to be found in book catalogues, if one will carefully peruse their pages, and not too long after the catalogue has been received, or the book will possibly be gone. The more important the book, the more people who are looking for it, and the less frequently it has appeared on the market, the more quickly of course will it be sold. I remember once about 1945 receiving a catalogue from my good friends on

Amsterdam Avenue, New York, of the Ideal Book Store. It was so studded with important volumes, fifteen of them I had marked, more than in any catalogue I have had in my hands for years, that I took the liberty of calling the New York store on the telephone. When I told my friend what I wanted, he said, "I have never known books to go like those in this catalogue. Of the fifteen you want, I have only three left."

But it is not only catalogues of second-hand books one should peruse, but bibliographies, book publishers' lists, older annuals of the United States catalogues, and lists of publications of learned societies. I do not know the reaction of others, but for me when I see the name of a book that has been in circulation for twenty or twenty-five years relating to a subject in which I am deeply interested, and yet a volume that I have never before heard of, I get excited. Turning the pages of the list of publications of the American Medieval Academy a year ago I came upon a work by the late Professor Andrew N. Anderson, previously unknown to me, *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog, and the Inclosed Nations* (Mediaeval Academy of America, Cambridge, Mass., 1932). I could hardly believe my eyes. Then I was afraid the book had long ago disappeared from their storeroom and I would never be able to get a copy. But, no—an unused volume was available and here I found two hundred and fifty pages covering all the literature in Greek, Latin, German, French, and English for the last eighteen hundred years, of all the material relating to that strange legend of Alexander the Great shutting up a Satanic horde behind the Cilician gates which would be loosed at the end of this age. I have never seen this work referred to in any discussion of Gog and Magog. Incidentally this very tradition is often referred to in the Ramsay volume I have just discussed.

One must learn to be willing to *wait* for books he really wants, he must have, he thinks he cannot do without, even if

the waiting runs into years. As many a man has waited years for the one girl he loves, so one who loves books and longs to know what is in some of them and to make some his own will also wait, and his waiting will ultimately be rewarded. Years ago, when writing a series of articles for the *Sunday School Times* (it was in 1927), on the significance of the third day in relation to the resurrection of our Lord, I tried to find a book the title of which I had somewhere picked up, an anonymous work, *The Triads of Scripture,* published in Lynchburg, Virginia, 1866. I made my wants known to three or four booksellers, including Schulte's on 4th Avenue, New York. Finally, I grew a little desperate and wrote to the librarian of the public library at Lynchburg, asking if they had it, intending to drive to Lynchburg to read it if they did (I was then a pastor in Covington, Virginia). The librarian wrote a rather severe note, telling me that my information was somewhere at fault, for she was acquainted with practically everything that had ever been published at Lynchburg, and she was sure this book had never been issued from that lovely Southern city. Well, of course, if the information was wrong, there was nothing to do about it. I had lost my source. But three years later, the mail brought a package from Schulte, enclosing a small volume bound in red cloth, *The Triads of Scripture,* published in Lynchburg, Virginia, in 1866.

Speaking of Schulte, for twenty years I had tried to purchase a copy of the great four-quarto volume work, *The Catalogue of Printed Bibles,* issued by the British and Foreign Bible Society, the most monumental work of its kind that has ever been issued, indispensable for a study of the history of the printed editions of the Scriptures. A very gracious member of the firm of Rosenbach, in their gorgeous New York headquarters, told me one day he was confident they had a set, but after looking for an hour he said that someone must

have purchased it in the last few weeks. I missed a set advertised in a British catalogue by about twenty-four hours, though I had a bookseller cable for it. But two years ago Mr. Schulte told me that he was selling out his bibliographical collection, and he would let me have his copy. It is now on my shelves. Don't think it was cheap. Some books must be paid for. For many years I have wanted to own Canon Streeter's rare and seldom-heard-of volume, *The Chained Library,* a beautifully illustrated work on the history of the great Medieval libraries of the cathedrals and colleges of England. Only two weeks ago did the book finally come into my hands. We must learn to wait! Look everywhere ourselves, and then try to get everyone else looking for you also. Pester your bookselling friends; keep after them, hound them for what you want; become a nuisance; do anything, but let the trade know you want that book! Sometimes the price is too high, and then you will have to let it go, but that is a part of life.

It is strange how sometimes you can put your hand on the only copy of a book for sale in America, perhaps in thirty years, the very day you need it—not always, but now and then. While writing the life of my beloved friend, the late Dr. Will H. Houghton, coming upon the fact that he was born in South Boston, and being unable to discover anything about South Boston, in my own books of American history, I went downtown in Pasadena to the bookshop of that gentle bookseller, Mr. Charles Yale, to ask if he had a volume dealing with the older history of Boston. Lo and behold! he had something better than that! He actually had an old volume—not expensive—no one else wanted it—on older Boston. It was the *History of South Boston, formerly Dorchester Neck, now Ward XII of the City of Boston,* by Thomas C. Simonds, Boston, 1857.

In trying to exhaust the important literature on the Olivet

Discourse for a new course I was teaching in our Seminary on the eschatology of the Gospels, I happened to walk into a bookstore on Sixth Street, Los Angeles, not looking for anything, and frankly not expecting to find anything important, when, what should stand out before my eyes but a beautifully-bound volume of a thousand pages, volume one of a work I had never even heard of before, *Catena Aurea, Commentary of the Four Gospels Collected Out of the Works of the Fathers,* by Saint Thomas Aquinas, published in Oxford, 1864. What! a collection from the fathers on the Gospels, from the church fathers, by Thomas Aquinas, and I had never heard of this in all these years? A rebuke like this does one good. Since then I have read that perhaps Aquinas himself did not personally collect this material. I really do not care whether he did or not. The material is here, gloriously here, and in this one volume I found over one hundred pages of opinions on the Olivet Discourse exclusively, from the church fathers. Just when I needed it—one copy in America was available for sale, ten miles from my school.

Sometimes books strangely come to one, and when they do, the circumstances are never forgotten if the book is a volume one has longed for. The most striking experience I have had of this nature occurred the year that I was asked to take the editorship of *Peloubet's Select Notes,* 1934. Twenty miles from Coatesville, where I was then a pastor, was that charming bookstore out on a country road three miles from Blueball, on the way to Lancaster, owned by my dear friend, now in glory, Mr. George Weaver, Mennonite preacher, farmer, harness-maker, bookseller (I am sure he had a good income). He knew books, and he loved them. The week after the editorship of Peloubet's was finally placed in my hands, I went up to Blueball to see how many volumes of previous issues he might have. "Ah," said he, "so you are going to edit *Peloubet's Notes.* Well, I have been waiting for you for

years." He took me up into the attic and showed me a complete set of *Peloubet's Notes* from 1877 to 1930 in perfect condition! Those were the days of friendship and bargains—I bought them for twenty cents a volume. But that is not the end of the story. One volume was missing, the first one, 1876. It did not particularly trouble me, because those early volumes are not important for any consulting today, though I thought it would be nice to have a complete set. What I am now going to say sounds like a fairystory, maybe it is, but nevertheless it is true. One winter evening that very year, on a snowy night, as I recall, a man rang the doorbell of the Presbyterian manse in Coatesville, with three or four books under his arm. He was terribly crippled; he walked with a heavy limp; both of his arms were twisted out of shape. He talked out of the corner of his mouth, because of some tragic facial paralysis. When I took him into the study he told me why he had come. "I found a few books," he said, "on a shelf in my grandfather's home on the farm" (and with this he named a place about eighteen miles away), "and I wondered if you would care to have them." He had one volume of *Peloubet's Notes,* dated 1876! I put some good books he could use in his arms and sent him home after a little while of fellowship. I never saw the man before; I have never seen him since. I do not remember his name; I do not know that he gave me his name. Why should that pitifully crippled man bring the only copy of the first year of *Peloubet's Notes* circulating in America since the beginning of the century to the door of a Presbyterian manse in Coatesville? I leave the story as it is, but I will never forget that hour.

I have said we should wait, and wait, and wait. I am waiting for many books and have waited for years. Strange how they do not show up! Perhaps some of them never will. Out of a card catalogue of a want-list of perhaps a thousand volumes let me mention just three or four as an illus-

tration of what I mean. A few years ago a bookseller in California who really knew and loved books issued a little magazine for booklovers and in it he had some autobiographical pages. Among the anecdotes he mentioned picking up for ten cents on the counter of a second-hand bookstore a catalogue, published in the 1870's, I think, by Scribner's, on the important literature in the English language dealing with Satan and demons. I wrote to the bookseller at the time and asked if he would like to sell it. He never replied, and I have forgotten who the man was or where the city was. I have written to Scribner's. They said they recalled the publication, but they did not even have a copy of their own that could be photostated.

Even books only a few years old can escape one. As late as 1935 the Oxford University Press published a volume, *Warburton and the Warburtonians,* by Thomas Evans, which I have not been able to pry out of anyone on both sides of the Atlantic. There just is not a copy in any bookstore, new or second-hand. I have pleaded with Oxford to find a copy, even five years ago, but there is none. How many did they print? One hundred? The reason I want it is because Warburton was the one that founded the great Warburton Lectureship on prophecy. There is a copy in the Library of Congress, but there is none in my library. Strange how it disappeared! And then as late as 1941 Macmillan published a book, *Bible Plants for American Gardens,* by Mrs. Eleanor King, but try to find a copy! There just is not one for sale anywhere. I saw it for the first and only time in the library of my friend, the gifted biographer, Dr. Richard Ellsworth Day, at Sunnyvale, California (and many of these plants he has growing in his own garden). I must not prolong this list, but a small book, not costly, that I have been looking for for years and have never found for sale is *Greek Divination,* by Halliday, New York, 1907. And then to go

back into the nineteenth century for a moment, I have asked booksellers for twenty years if they could secure for me a set of the Nicene Fathers in ten volumes. The Ante-Nicene Fathers anyone can pick up. The sets of Augustine and Chrysostom can be found, but where can you buy a set of those volumes that contain the writings of the Greek and Latin Fathers, A.D. 340–750, in fourteen volumes, Eusebius, Athanasius, Jerome, etc.? A friend of mine has all but two of these volumes, but I have never been able to persuade him to let go of them, though I know he never consults them. Would that this line might melt his heart. And then there is a set I would like for my Palestinian researches, the ten-volume work published by the Palestine Pilgrim Text Society, containing translations of the principal early travellers in Palestine from the Latin and Greek of centuries ago. I remember once asking the great authority on Palestine, Father Vincent of the Catholic Biblical Institute of Jerusalem, as I was walking through the great library, if he had this set. With a lovely smile, partly of pity, upon his face, he said, "No, we do not have it. We do not need it. We have the original texts."

Long before we have come to this part of the chapter many will be asking, "What *I* want to know is, *what* books shall I look for?" Let me say first of all that no man can tell another man with finality what books he should look for. Often I get letters asking me to recommend some good books for Bible study. But the answer to a question like that depends upon many different factors: How much education has the man had? Is he, or is he not a Seminary graduate? Is he just beginning his ministry or near the end? What funds does he have available for the purchase of books? What does he want to do with the reading he intends to engage in? What books does he already have in his library? I could never recommend Lightfoot's Commentary on Galatians to a young farmer

who had no more than one hour a night to give to Bible study. And there are good books regarding the Bible that a seminary graduate would find quite elementary. So I am not here planning to say this and that book everyone must have. I have drawn up such lists in years gone by, and they must suffice for the present. Here I would like to take a different line and lay down one fundamental precept and build around it. If I am now speaking to ministers, *let every clergyman, everyone ordained by God to spend his life in the study and proclamation of the Word of God, set himself the task of mastering one great area of theological knowledge, as far as possible.* And to do so, let him acquire first of all the most important work in that particular field, and then use that as a guide for acquiring other books and studying each special aspect of the field which he is undertaking to investigate.

While the book is not new, yet an excellent introduction to the whole field of Biblical and theological literature is the work published in Edinburgh in 1886, *An Introduction to Theology, Its Principles, Its Branches, Its Results, and Its Literature,* by Alfred Cave, at that time Principal and Professor of Theology at Hackney College. A later work covering only one field in the many mentioned by Cave is the monumental *Introduction to the New Testament,* by one of the greatest conservative New Testament scholars of modern times, Theodor Zahn. The American translation, New York, 1917, is based upon the 3rd German edition and was printed in three volumes (one thousand, seven hundred and eighteen pages), my own copy being, fortunately, the India paper edition, three volumes bound in one. A man could well take two years to go through this work, with corollary readings. No hour spent in these pages but would refresh the soul and enlarge the mind of any reverent student. Another field which few investigate is one in which a minister would have his whole concept of preaching and of the greatness and glory

of that ministry enlarged by a day by day reading of the two-volume work almost never advertised in book catalogues, *A History of Preaching,* by the late Professor Edwin Charles Dargan, a work of over eleven hundred pages, published by Hodder and Stoughton in 1905. This work carries the history of preaching down to close to the end of the nineteenth century. The author expected to issue a third volume, but never lived to see that work completed. When a young man in the ministry, I dared to write Professor Dargan, asking him when the third volume would be published. And I have a letter before me which he most graciously wrote, dated July 7, 1919, that might be of interest to many readers:

"My dear Mr. Smith:

I thank you very much for your kind and courteous letter of July 2. It is a great pleasure for me to know that some of my brethren in the ministry find pleasure and help in a work which cost me years of labor.

I regret very much to say that I do not see any prospect of my being able to complete the work. I left the Seminary at Louisville twelve years ago, and found it hard to finish the second volume after getting out of that atmosphere. I am sorry that time and circumstances both have made it necessary for me to leave the work incomplete.

With great appreciation of your interest, I am

Cordially yours,

(signed) E. C. Dargan."

One could use this work as a guide to the sermons of the great preachers of every century.

Closely related to such a work as we have just mentioned is the inexhaustible and ever-fascinating subject of the *literature* of the Christian Church of the first four centuries. May I take the liberty of referring here to some volumes that would greatly help one in coming to know and understand the works of the church fathers. The volume

by Gustav Krüger, *History of Early Christian Literature in the First Three Centuries,* though published as long ago as 1897, is still worth reading; while not a history, A. F. Findlay's *Byways in Early Christian Literature,* Edinburgh, 1923, will be found helpful, and delightful reading. An excellent work, not too well known, published in London in 1920, is, the *Handbook of the Early Christian Fathers,* by Ernest Leigh-Bennett. The German New Testament scholar, Martin Dibelius, a few years ago issued a work, soon after 1936 translated into English, *A Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature,* which indeed is "a fresh approach." The last work is a most charming volume, comprehensive, not too technical, with excellent chronological tables, *A History of Early Christian Literature,* by Edgar J. Goodspeed (University of Chicago Press, 1942).

Of all the subjects, however, that will enlarge one's mind and heart, that will transform one's life and guide him into the depths of Divine truth, is the inexhaustible one of the person and work of Jesus Christ our Lord. I am not even going to try to suggest the best literature in this vast area. But I would like to say that of all the themes concerning Christ to which a minister should give his continued, prayerful, and earnest attention the pre-eminent one is His death. Even here I do not in any way wish to attempt giving a list of even the most important books on the subject, but I would like to suggest three that are not too well known, and though they may be difficult to secure, should be read and studied even if the books must be borrowed. First of all, there is that great volume by Otto Zoeckler, for many years the Professor of Theology in Greifswald, *The Cross of Christ, Studies in the History of Religion and the Early Life of the Church,* a work of nearly five hundred pages published (in an English translation) in London in 1877. The text is preceded by a ten-page bibliography of monographic literature on the cross and

the sign of the cross. In addition the work carries a great apparatus of footnotes. Frankly, this volume will introduce any student to practically every important work on the death of Christ and the cross of Christ down to the middle of the nineteenth century. One of the most interesting of all treatments in the book is the final one in the appendix on the sign in the heavens of Matthew 24:30. If one is not averse to studying the cross from an archaeological standpoint, there is a monumental work by William Wood Seymour, published by Putnam's in 1898, *The Cross, Its Tradition, History, and Art.* Here is a bibliography with many titles not in Zoeckler, of over three hundred titles. The volume carries over three hundred illustrations, some of them full plates. Then from a different approach, one should try to secure that profound work of theology, *The Doctrine of the Atonement as Taught by Christ Himself,* by the late Dr. George Smeaton, for some years the Professor of Exegetical Theology in New College, Edinburgh (1871).

To depart for a moment from Biblical and theological subjects, no minister today can afford to ignore the deep currents and development of European history. Let me recommend just one volume which will prove an excellent introduction to the whole great subject of the history of Europe since Napoleon, *The Course of Europe Since Waterloo,* by W. P. Hall of Princeton, and William S. Deeps of the University of Minnesota, the second edition, 1947, extending to over one thousand pages of text, with all the bibliographic references for corollary reading one could ask for. And then by all means why not dip deeply into the glorious subjects to be found in the history of English literature? An almost perfect introduction to this is that beautiful piece of printing and binding and magnificent monument of scholarship, *A Literary History of England,* edited by Professor Albert C. Baugh, a work of over sixteen hundred pages of text, with bibliographies

brought right up to date, published in 1948 by Appleton-Century-Croft. Let every man put his hands on this book while it is still available and make it his guide for years to come. Along with this one might well read the still available work by my gracious friend, Professor Waldo H. Dunn, *English Biography,* London, 1916. And if one wishes to study more minutely some one period of English literature, he would do well to begin with a new work (1949) issued by the Princeton University Press, *The Literature of the Anglo-Saxons,* by Dr. George K. Anderson. As an indication of how true a guide this book is to the literature of that period, let me simply state that he has gathered here a bibliography for chapter X alone, covering sixteen pages, on "Homiletic Prose."

I trust that some who are reading this opening chapter will not neglect the field of philosophy, which must never be taken as a substitute for theology, but without which one cannot understand the deeper currents of thought in our chaotic century. One might well begin with a book now a half-century old, but in many ways still unsurpassed, *The History of Philosophy,* by the German scholar, W. Windelband (2nd ed., New York, 1901, 726 pages), or, instead of this, or for supplementary reading, the larger standard work by Professor G. A. B. Fuller, *A History of Philosophy* (Rev. ed., New York, 1945, 1000 pages). Then, if one desires to go more deeply into certain aspects of the history of philosophy, he would do very well to study with care Miss Kathleen Freeman's *The Pre-Socratic Philosophy* (Oxford, 1949, 2nd ed.). One should also turn to Professor Werner Jaeger's *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers,* the Gifford Lectures for 1936 (Oxford, 1947). Closely related to this is Dr. Martin P. Nilsson's *Greek Piety,* published at Oxford in 1948. This might be followed by Professor Jaeger's recently issued work, *Aristotle, Fundamentals of the History of His Development*

(Oxford, 1948). Even in these pages one can find remarkable illustrations bearing directly upon the Scriptures, e.g., these words of Aristotle which he uttered late in life, "The more solitary and isolated I am, the more I have come to love myths." When one reads this, of course, he cannot help but think of the Apostle Peter's statement that we have *not* followed cunningly devised fables. Then, for the later periods, one may well turn to Höffding's two-volume work, *A History of Modern Philosophy* (Eng. trans., 1935), and, for our own country, either Herbert S. Schneider's *History of American Philosophy* (1946), or *Philosophy in America,* by Anderson and Fisch (New York, 1939).

A tremendous subject into which every serious student of the Word of God should begin a new investigation and plan for a thorough piece of exhaustive research is that of the history of the Jews, and for corollaries, the history of Palestine, and Zionism, and Jerusalem. An excellent introduction to the history of Israel is the recently revised and beautifully illustrated edition, *Short History of the Jewish People,* by Cecil Roth, published by the East and West Library (London, 1948), which will introduce one to the other literature. Of course one must not forget the great eight-volume standard work by Graetz. A work of great value, with chapters not generally touched upon in this type of literature is *Israel and the Nations,* by Joseph F. Bloch (Berlin, 1927) a work of over 600 pages. Then, bringing the subject a little nearer our own history, one should try to secure *The Jews in the Literature of England to the End of the 19th Century,* by Montague Frank Modder (Jewish Publication Society, 1944, 435 pages, of which 50 pages are bibliography). Slightly aside from history itself, but a most delightful book is the one edited by E. N. Adler, *Jewish Travelers,* published by Bloch in 1931.

Regarding the history of Jerusalem—and here is a glorious

field for investigation—do not pass by because it is one hundred years old, the still very important work by George Williams, *The Holy City, Historical, Topographical, and Antiquarian Notes of Jerusalem* (London, 1849, 1200 pages). A later work, still valuable, is *Jerusalem, the City of Herod and Saladin,* by Walter Besant and A. H. Palmer (Rev. ed., New York, 1890). A still later work is *Jerusalem, a Historical Sketch,* by Lionel Cust (London, 1924). Then, of course, greater than all of them, wonderfully stimulating, written out of a vast knowledge of the subject, is Sir George Adam Smith's two-volume work, *Jerusalem,* with a bibliography and elaborate appendices.

We still need a good book on Jerusalem in prophecy. The question of Zionism and Israel's relationship to the United Nations and to previous legislation in the United States is producing an enormous literature. The following are important, some of them not too well known, but any of them will give clues to much else that is important and allow one to build up his library around this subject, which is going to become more and more important in world history:

Israel Cohen: *The Zionist Movement.* Rev. ed., New York, 1946.

Cyrus Adler and Aaron M. Margalith: *With Firmness in the Right: American Diplomatic Action Affecting Jews,* 1840–1945. New York, American Jewish Committee, 1946.

Jacob Robinson: *Palestine and the United Nations.* Public Affairs Press. Washington, D.C., 1947.

The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Nov., 1932, "Palestine: A Decade of Development."

The Jewish National Home in Palestine. Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs. House of Representatives 69th Congress, 2nd Session. H. Res. 418 and H. Res. 419. Feb. 8, 9, 15, 16, 1944.

Palestine: A Study of Jewish Arab, and British Policies. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1947. 2 vols.

L. Larry Leonard, "The United Nations and Palestine," in *International Conciliation,* October, 1941.

Jacob Rader Marcus: *A Brief Bibliography of American Jewish History.* The American Jewish Historical Society, 145 E. 32 Street, New York 16, New York.

Jerusalem before the United Nations, American Zionist Council, New York City.

On the relationship of the Jews to Christianity, there are two recent books and one older one that will keep one busy for hours: *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ,* by Jacob Jocz (London, 1949, S.P.C.K.) and *Christianity and the Children of Israel,* by A. Roy Eckhardt (Kings Crown Press, New York, 1948).

Finally, one should try to secure that scholarly three-volume work, edited by W. O. E. Oesterley, and published by the Sheldon Press, London, 1937, *Judaism and Christianity.*

I picked up in Jerusalem in 1937 a book that perhaps cannot be secured in this country, but if you can find one in a library, by all means borrow it. It is called *Hibbath Zion* and is by the great historian of Zionism, Nahum Sokolow. This volume, published in Jerusalem in 1934, is really a history of the love of Zion as manifested in Jewish literature from the early medieval ages down to the end of the 19th century.

A good book for a guide in the reading of theological literature is John Macleod's *Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History Since the Reformation,* published in Edinburgh in 1943. The author was Principal of the Free Church College, Edinburgh. A great work, not as well known in this country as it ought to be, which will serve as an excellent guide through the mazes of modern apologetics, was published in its fourth edition in London in 1930, *Pro Fide,*

A Textbook of Modern Apologetics for Theological Students, Ministers of Religion, and Others, by Charles Harris. The last edition extends to over 700 pages, and has tremendous bibliographies on all the modern "isms." Should one wish to investigate the history of prophetic interpretation, especially that of the book of Revelation, there is nothing to compare with the 400 pages devoted exclusively to this subject in the fourth volume of the fifth edition of E. B. Elliott's *Horae Apocalypticae* (London, 1862), and with this, one should read one of the greatest volumes of prophetic study ever published in this country, *The Thousand Years in Both Testaments,* by Nathaniel West (1889).

Let me close this chapter on suggestions by recommending to my fellow students of the Scriptures an exhaustive investigation of the Olivet Discourse. Let us think for a moment what we have for investigation in the study of this one address of our Lord. First of all, in the three synoptic accounts there are 165 verses, equal to one-fourth of the entire Gospel of Mark. Then as one begins the subject, he will have to make a careful study of the context of everything that happened on Tuesday of Holy Week. He will then move into the literature on the teachings of Christ, then New Testament eschatology, and then, specifically, the eschatology of the Gospels. He must not fail to give careful attention to the geographical significance in the Scriptures of the Mount of Olives, with particular reference to Zechariah 14:4. Then, of course, many Old Testament passages reappear in the phraseology of this profound panoramic view of the future—the days of Noah, the abomination of desolation of the book of Daniel, all those prophecies, especially in Isaiah, Joel, and Zechariah, that pertain to celestial phenomena. Then, of course, there is the great subject of the fall of Jerusalem, involving the entire history of that city, the great tribulation, the fullness of the Gentiles, false Christs, false teachers, false

prophets, the second advent of our Lord, the significance of war and earthquakes in the prophetic Scriptures, the parables of our Lord. As we study these passages, we will quite often come upon words that are not found in any other portion of the Greek New Testament, for instance, a cluster of them in Luke 21:25, 26. Also, as far as possible, one will need to read in the literature of the Olivet Discourse, which will be found quite elusive.

Strange to say, the most important book on the Olivet Discourse to be published in this country was issued nearly a century ago, *Our Lord's Great Prophecy and Its Parallels Throughout the Bible,* by D. D. Buck, a work of 472 pages, published in Nashville in 1857. I have been utterly unable to find out anything about the author of this book. In 1924, the missionary statesman, the late Henry W. Frost published through the Oxford Press an interesting small volume of something over 300 pages, *Matthew 24 and the Revelation,* which is important, but it does not thoroughly exhaust the great problems of the Olivet Discourse. There have been a few since. The best treatment I have seen is a small one, very difficult to come upon, published in Melbourne, Australia in 1910, *The Time of the End but the End Not Yet, Some Explanations of the Prophecy of Matthew XXV,* by E. J. Thomas.

Why no New Testament scholar of this century has written a worthwhile volume on this marvelous passage, more significant now than ever, I do not know. It would be so gratifying to the author of this book if these concluding paragraphs to this chapter should lead some young man with even fair equipment but a passion for investigation, to give us a worthwhile volume on this prophetic discourse.

Never has the field of Biblical investigation been so rich, never has literature been so abundant, never has there been such a time as this for the reinvestigation of the oracles of

God. No man in any field of research, not even in that of nuclear physics or aerodynamics, has the opportunity of living such a daily life of excitement, of joy, of expectancy, as the student of the Word of God. Instead of 2200 years of the study of the Old and New Testaments, and the production of a vast literature gathered around every major field of Biblical truth exhausting the subject, it seems as though all these centuries have only, as it were, brought us to the threshold of a whole new era of Biblical study. And the best part of it all is that the study and understanding of this book is the study and understanding of divine revelation, of the secrets of God, of the truths which mold human history, of hopes which will never be diminished or fail, of the life and work of that Person who alone is able to deliver men, the Saviour, King and Judge of the human race. Let us anew, as Timothy of old, give heed to the apostle's words uttered shortly before he died, who himself had so gloriously fulfilled them in his own ministry. Let us give ourselves wholly unto these things, and through this manner of life will we ourselves be enriched, our people the more abundantly blessed, and we be found workmen rightly dividing the word of truth, living well-pleasing unto God.

Fifty great subjects I have not even hinted at. But my chapter is already too long. For extended lists of worth-while books for Christian students, may I take the liberty of calling attention to my volume *Profitable Bible Study,* which has just appeared in a revised and enlarged edition, and, a fairly comprehensive list I compiled for the Intervarsity magazine *His,* in 1946, recently reprinted in *UEA* (issue of Sept. 15, 1950).

II

NOTES FROM THE MARGINS OF MY BIBLE

While for teaching purposes I have many and large notebooks, during the years on the margins of a wide-margin Bible I have from time to time written things which seemed to me unusually rich, thoughts that I might want suddenly to quote in expounding the Scriptures at some school or Bible conference, when of course I would not have my notebooks with me, or something that could even be included in a sermon but must be available at once and word for word. I have not been as diligent in entering these items as I ought, and have at least a hundred more that, when leisure comes—and I am afraid it never will—must be entered. Let me, however, in this chapter just place before my fellow students of the Scriptures a few of these choice, incisive, to me ever-inspiring comments. I am not here attempting to *interpret* any passages, for that is not the purpose of these marginal notes. Furthermore, when it is discovered in reading this chapter that I have made no comment about large areas of the Scriptures, it does not mean they are not to be given consideration, nor that I have not myself done so.

Perhaps we should begin with Luther's great statement in his *Table Talk* on the inexhaustibleness of the Word of God:

> We must ever remain scholars here; we cannot sound the depth of one single verse in Scripture; we get hold but of the A.B.C. and that imperfectly. . . . I have many times essayed thoroughly to investigate the ten commandments, but at the very outset, "I am the Lord thy God," I stuck fast; that very one word *I* put me to a non-plus. He that has but one word of God before him, and out of that one word cannot make a sermon, can never be a preacher.

Matthew Henry wrote when only eleven years old, December 7, 1673:

I love the Word of God, I esteem it above all, I find my heart so inclined, I desire it as the food of my soul, I greatly delight in it, both in reading and hearing it and my soul can witness subjection to it in some measure. I think I love the Word of God for the purity of it; I love the ministers and messengers of the Word; I am often reading it; I rejoice in the good success of it; all which were given as marks of true love to the Word in a sermon that I lately heard on Psalm 119:140, "Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it."

To come back to Luther for a moment, in his Epistle Dedicatory, in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans,* with his usual vigorous style, he gave it as his conviction:

Such veneration we ought indeed to entertain for the Word of God, that we ought not to pervert it in the least degree by varying expositions; for its majesty is diminished, I know not how much, especially when expounded with great discretion and with great sobriety. And if it be deemed a great wickedness to contaminate anything that is dedicated to God, he surely cannot be endured, who, with impure, or even unprepared hands, will handle that very thing, which of all things is the most sacred on earth.

As a rule, I never use quotations that I cannot trace, but some years ago I came upon one by the great philosopher, Immanuel Kant, no Christian, written at the age of 72 in 1796, which has always intrigued me. I do not know if it means that he turned more earnestly to the Christian faith at this time, but this is what he is claimed to have said:

The Bible is the Book, the contents of which will testify to its divine origin. In the greatness of the plan of salvation, and its execution, it discloses unto us the greatness of our guilt, and the depth of our fall. The Bible is my greatest treasure: without it I would be miserable.

Tholuck once said (I take this from Calvin's Commentary on Joshua, English translation, page 356) something that every young man, and older, ought ever to remember if he is at all prone to developing fantastic interpretations:

> A single individual must naturally hesitate before rejecting that sense of a passage which the great majority of learned and pious interpreters of different periods have adopted; but, provided that by so doing, he overthrows no fundamental truth of Christianity, he will not still bear to reject that sense whenever the context or the language make it necessary.

The most concise statement I have ever seen in one sentence on the opening verse of the Bible is in J. Lindsay Alexander's *Biblical Theology;* in fact, he has put a whole theology in this one sentence:

> In this short sentence, the Bible places itself in antagonism to a whole phalanx of opinions taught in ancient schools of philosophy or incorporated with ancient systems of religion. This sentence is a denial of the Greek doctrine of the eternity of matter; of the Epicurean doctrine of a fortuitous concourse of atoms, as that out of which the Kosmos arose; of the stoic doctrine of an all-compelling fate; of the Pantheistic doctrine of the identity of God with the universe; of the Polytheistic doctrine of a plurality of gods, and of the dualistic doctrine of a good and a bad principle dividing the formation and the rule of the world between them.

Some years ago I determined that I would read through that superb collection of the best in literature, *The Universal Anthology,* in thirty-two volumes, edited by Richard Garnett, the Keeper of Printed Books in the British Museum for nearly forty years. I do not here care to confess how far I have thus far read in the anthology, but the time I have so spent in these pages has more than repaid me in the discovery of just one poem which otherwise I never would have seen, "The Murder of Abel," by Vittorio Alfieri, Italian dramatist (1749–1803). Let me quote from it:

Adam

"My son! . . . sad day! . . . sad sight . . . How deep and large
The wound with which his guiltless head is cloven!
Alas! There is no remedy. My son,
Who gave thee such a blow? and what the weapon? . . .
O Heavens! It's not Cain's pickax that I see
Lying all bloody there? . . . O grief! O madness!
And is it possible that Cain has slain thee?
A brother kill his brother? I myself
Will arm, with thy own arms; and find thee out,
And with my own hands slay thee. O thou just
Almighty God, didst thou behold this crime,
And suffer it? breathes still the murderer?

O God! . . . He dies . . . Unhappy father! How
Hast that last sob cut off at once his voice
And life as well!—Behold thee, then, at last,
Death terrible and cruel, who the daughter
Of my transgression art! O ruthless Death,
Is, then, the first to fall before thy blows
A guileless youth like this? 'Twas me the first,
And me alone, whom thou shouldst have struck down . . .
—What shall I do without my children now?
And this dear lifeless body, how can I
From Eve conceal it? Hide from her the truth?
In vain: but, how to tell her? And, then, where,
Where bury my dear Abel? O my God!
How tear myself from him?—But, what behold I?
Eve is approaching me with weary steps
From far! She promised me that she would wait
Beyond the wood for me . . . Alas!—but I
Must meet and detain her, such a sight
Might in one moment kill her."

Eve

"Heavens! What see I? in thy face
What new and dreadful trouble do I see?
Hast thou not found them?"

There is a statement concerning the relationship of the nation Israel to the land of Israel tucked away in the first volume of the *History of the Old Covenant* by J. H. Kurtz which is nothing less than a gem:

> As the body is adapted and destined for the soul and the soul for the body, so is Israel for that country and that country for Israel. Without Israel the land is like a body from which the soul has fled; banished from its country, Israel is like a ghost which cannot find rest.

While we are still here in the 12th chapter of Genesis, perhaps we ought to recall the words of Alfred Edersheim in *The Temple:*

> When God bound up the future of all nations in the history of Abraham and his seed, He made that history prophetic; and each event and every rite became, as it were, a bud, destined to open in blossom, and ripen into fruit on that tree under the shadow of which all nations were to be gathered.

Turning to the book of Exodus, I have always liked these stirring words on the significance of that great event by Dean Stanley in his fascinating *History of the Jewish People:*

> They had passed in that night from Africa to Asia; they have crossed one of the great boundaries which divide the quarters of the world . . . This change of local situation was at once a change of moral condition. It is their deliverance from slavery. It is the earliest recorded instance of a great national emancipation. This, the first epoch of our religious history, is, in its original historical significance, the sanctification, the glorification of national independence and freedom . . . This deliverance—the first and greatest in their history, was effected, not by their own power, but by the power of God.

Though many of my friends probably have read this, I do not hesitate to quote here the masterly paragraph by S. H. Kellogg in *The Expositor's Bible* on the purpose of the book of Leviticus:

Leviticus was given to Israel to direct them how they might live as a holy nation, in fellowship with God. The keynote of the book is "Holiness to Jehovah." More particularly, the object of the book was to furnish for the theocracy set up in Israel a code of law which should secure their physical, moral, and spiritual well-being. But the establishment of the theocracy in Israel was itself only a means to an end; namely, to make Israel a blessing to all nations, in mediating to the Gentiles the redemption of God. Hence, the Levitical laws were all intended and adapted to train and prepare the nation or this special historic mission to which God had chosen them. To this end it was absolutely necessary first of all, that Israel should be kept separate from the heathen nations. These laws . . . are of such a character, that obedience to them, even in a very imperfect way, has made the nation to this day to be separated from all the peoples in the midst of whom they dwell. The law of Leviticus . . . was intended to reveal to Israel the real character of God, and in particular His unapproachable holiness. For if Israel is to teach the nations the way of holiness, in which alone they can be blessed, the chosen nation must itself first be taught holiness by the Holy One. . . . But the law of Leviticus was not only intended to prepare Israel for the Messiah by thus awakening a sense of sin and need, it was so ordered as to be in many ways directly typical and prophetic of Christ and His great redemption in its future historical development.

Possibly some of my readers will disagree with me, but I think Dr. G. Campbell Morgan has not erred when in unfolding the meaning of the book of Joshua he has said:

Today "Jehovah is a Man of war." At this hour He is the foe of sin in personal, social, civic, and national life . . . Thank God He will not make peace with sin in my heart . . . God is a Man of war, smiting sin, refusing to make truce with it, accepting no white flag of surrender offered to Him, except that of the abandonment of sin, and all because He loves me. He is the foe of sin in me, in London, in England, in the world. If in these days His methods are not exactly the methods of the past, let it never be forgotten that even today every army that marches is under His control; that He girds Cyrus outside the covenant as surely

now as in the days of old. I bless His name for the thunder of his authority, and for the profound conviction that He is fierce and furious in His anger against sin, wherever it manifests itself.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, very few Christians of this generation have seen the poem by Rudyard Kipling, "The Road to Endor," but it is just about the finest commentary on the 28th chapter of I Samuel that one could imagine. Let me quote here the first, second, and sixth stanzas:

The Road to Endor is easy to tread
  For Mother, or yearning Wife.
There, it is sure, we shall meet our Dead
  As they were even in life.
Earth has not dreamed of the blessing in store
For desolate hearts on the road to En-dor.

Whispers shall comfort us out of the dark—
  Hands—ah God!—that we knew!
Visions and voices—look and hark!—
  Shall prove that the tale is true,
And that those who have passed to the further shore
May be hailed—at a price—on the road to En-dor.

Oh the road to En-dor is the oldest road
  And the craziest road of all!
Straight it runs to the Witch's abode,
  As it did in the days of Saul,
And nothing has changed of the sorrow in store
For such as go down on the road to En-dor!

Dr. William G. Moorehead, the beloved and revered President of Xenia Theological Seminary for many years, in his too-seldom seen work, *Outline Studies in the Books of the Old Testament,* has something on the arrangement of the Psalms that I think cannot be surpassed:

It is firmly believed that none other but the Spirit of God arranged these Psalms as we now have them; and that there is a profound meaning in their order. The whole book is a sort of

mirror of God's ways with His people, and with the world. In the first book Israel is in the covenant relation with God, and therefore the covenant name, *Jehovah,* is prominent; in the second, the people have fallen from their first love, have gone into apostasy and unbelief, and *God* takes the pre-eminence, God, the Judge and the Governor; in the third, they are reviewed as returning to their allegiance, under the loving and faithful dealing of God, as He is revealed to them in the double name of God and Lord; while in the remaining books, Israel, according to all the prophets and Paul in the 11th of the Romans, is brought again and finally into full favor and fellowship, and all the earth rejoices in the fullness of redemption, and the great Hallelujah Chorus is sung. Like some majestic oratorio, some sublime symphony, is this book of Psalms, with the theme sometimes receding, then again advancing, now in the minor, then in the major, and anon in the chromatic scales, struggling through difficulties, triumphing over obstacles, steadily moving forward to the climax when all the voices and all the instruments, the parts and the chorus unite and combine in the final and overwhelming Hallelujah . . . The book of Psalms . . . is prophetic. The Spirit of God has ordered these His songs in the way He has, that the believer might here, as in so much else of Holy Scripture, have the assurance of the blessed outcome of God's ways with the world.

Dr. James M. Gray, life-long student of the Scriptures in his *Synthetic Bible Studies,* has made a comment concerning the Song of Solomon which many of us would echo:

Of all the books of the Old Testament, I feel myself least competent to speak of the Song of Solomon. I am not ignorant of what others have thought and written about the book, but personally I have not grasped its contents as in the case of some of the other books.

The book of Daniel has always deeply interested me. Let us spend a moment in these inexhaustible pages. Auberlen, in one of the profoundest books on Daniel and Revelation ever written, which will still repay very careful reading, has remarked on the image of the second chapter:

The person who first beholds, in a dream, the entire future development of the kingdom of the world, is not the prophet Daniel, but the world's ruler, Nebuchadnezzar. It was from the first of its representatives, who had conquered the theocracy, that the world-power was to learn its own destiny, and that it would in its turn be subdued and subdued forever by the Kingdom of God.

William Kelly wrote many books that could be called dry (though not as dry as Darby), but his book on Daniel has life and vigor in it. I know of no one who has made a better comment on Daniel falling on his face in prayer before God after reading again the prophecies of Jeremiah, than he:

He does not go to the people, whom the prophecy so intimately concerned, telling them the good news, but he draws near to God. Faith always tends to draw into the presence of God him who thereby understands his mind or will in anything. He has communion with God about that which he receives from Him, before even he makes it known to those who are the subjects of the blessing . . . If the study of prophecy does not tend to give us a deeper sense of the failure of God's people upon the earth, I am persuaded we lose one of its most important practical uses.

When Bishop Richard Hurd (1720–1808) was invited to deliver the Warburton Lectures on Prophecy for 1768, Edward Gibbon, the historian and enemy of Christianity wrote his friend the Bishop urging him not to undertake an exposition of the prophecies of Daniel. His tribute to Daniel is remarkable. It is not found in any work dealing with Gibbon's life, strange to say, but is buried away toward the end of the fifth volume of *The Works of Richard Hurd,* and because so few have seen it, I am sure my readers will be grateful for having it here:

There are two reasons which still force me to withhold my assent. I. The author of the book of Daniel is too well informed of the revolutions of the Persian and Macedonian empires, which

are supposed to have happened long after his death. II. He is too ignorant of the transactions of his own times. In a word, he is too exact for a Prophet, and too fabulous for a contemporary historian.

I. The first of these objections was urged fifteen hundred years ago, by the celebrated Porphyry. He not only frankly acknowledged, but carefully illustrated the distinct and accurate series of history, contained in the book of Daniel, as far as the death of Antiochus Epiphanes; for beyond that period the author seems to have had no other guide than the dim and shadowy light of conjecture. The four empires are clearly delineated, the expedition of Xerxes into Greece, the rapid conquest of Persia by Alexander, his untimely death without posterity, the division of his vast monarchy into four kingdoms, one of which, Egypt, is mentioned by name, their various wars and intermarriages, the persecution of Antiochus, the prophanation of the Temple, and the invincible arms of the Romans, are described with as much perspicuity in the prophecies of Daniel, as in the histories of Justin and Diodorus. From such a perfect resemblance, the artful infidel would infer, that both were alike composed after the event.

Turning to the New Testament, let me begin with that fine statement of Alexander Whyte regarding those men whom God has set aside to be life students of this divine work:

That elect and honourable, and enviable class of men that we call students of New Testament exegesis. Surely they are the happiest and the most enviable of all men, who have been set apart for nothing else but to the understanding and the opening up of the hid treasures of God's Word and God's Son.

Dr. John A. Scott, for many years Professor of Greek Literature at Northwestern University, and during his day probably the outstanding authority on Homer in our country, paid this splendid tribute to St. Luke:

Luke was not only a Doctor and an historian, but he was one of the world's greatest men of letters. He wrote the clearest and the best Greek written in that century . . . If Jesus had two human parents, why did the shrewd Gentile physician never sus-

pect that fact? Since the arguments were sufficient to convince Dr. Luke, we know that we are dealing with no ignorant childish fancy.

Though all readers of the New Testament are acquainted with and can repeat the statement of Jesus, "Heaven and earth may pass away, but my words shall never pass away" (Matt. 24:35), I wonder how many have really given consideration to the deeper meaning of this amazing statement. Canon Liddon in his *Sermons on Some Words of Christ* (p. 18) has a paragraph that ought to be printed every year in our church bulletins:

"My words shall not pass away." Write down these words, dear brethren, on the title page of your New Testaments, that when you open that blessed book they may remind you of what you are doing: You are approaching the One Teacher Whose authority is not impaired by time. Write them down, fathers and mothers, but especially you who are Christian mothers, that you may never forget to teach your children, more carefully and thoroughly than anything that merely commands success in earthly life, those words which are more precious than ever before at the hour of death, and which are triumphantly justified beyond the veil. Write them down, I pray you, in your books and in your hearts, gentle and simple, lettered and unlearned, old and young, that they may help you while the day of trial lasts, to set your feet upon the Rock, and order your goings. Never in the morning leave your room without asking, "What do these blessed Words, what does some one of them, say to me for guidance, or support, of instruction, or warning in the work of the day?" Never lie down at night without bringing what has been thought and said and done to be judged by the Word of the Divine Teacher, that you may ask His pardon where you have gone astray, or thank Him for His grace when you have been enabled to conquer. To make those words the rule of life and thought must needs be the effort of a true Christian. God grant that we may make it while yet we can, and may find at our last hour, from a personal experience, that the words which do not pass away are also the words of Eternal Life.

Philip Schaff has said of the Gospel of John:

The fourth Gospel is the gospel of Gospels, the holy of holies in the New Testament. It is the most original, the most important, the most influential book in all literature. It unites in harmony the deepest knowledge and the purest love of Christ. We hear, as it were, His beating heart; we lay our hands in His wound-prints and exclaim with doubting Thomas, "My Lord and my God." No book is so plain and yet so deep, so natural and yet so full of mystery. It is simple as a child and sublime as a seraph, gentle as a lamb and bold as an eagle, deep as the sea and high as the heavens.

Let us turn for a moment to the Epistles of Paul. Professor Paton J. Gloag, in a work not too often seen today (*Introduction to the Pauline Epistles,* Edinburgh, 1874) on the argumentative aspect of Paul's epistles has said:

He appeals to our judgment; he argues; he establishes propositions; he starts objections in order to refute them; he draws inferences; he aims at our convictions; and he fortifies his statements by proofs drawn from the Scriptures of the Old Testament. He is by far the most argumentative of the sacred writers; so much so that on this point he almost stands alone.

Schaff once wrote:

His words are as many warriors marching on to victory and peace; they are like a mountain torrent rushing in foaming rapids over precipices and then calmly flowing through green meadows, or like a thunderstorm ending in a refreshing shower and bright sunshine. . . .

They compress more ideas into fewer words than any other writings, human or divine, except the Gospels. They are of more real and genuine value to the church than all the systems of theology from Origen to Schleiermacher.

On the Epistle to the Romans, Calvin remarked:

When anyone gains a knowledge of this Epistle he has an entrance opened to him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture.

Luther said:

> This Epistle is the masterpiece of the New Testament, and the purest gospel. It can never be too much read or studied; and the more it is handled, the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes.

Professor Henry B. Swete, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, in his *Commentary on the Greek Text of the Book of Revelation*—one of the greatest that will ever be written—has some words on the 6th chapter of Revelation which, though they were written one-half century ago, mean even more today than when he penned them:

> He saw a vast world-wide power, outwardly victorious and eager for fresh conquests, yet full of the elements of unrest, danger, and misery; war, scarcity, pestilence, mortality in all its forms, abroad or ready to shew themselves. This series of pictures repeats itself in history, and the militarism and lust of conquest, which it represents both in their attractive and repellent aspects, are among the forces set loose by the hand of Christ, to prepare the way for His coming and the final publication of the secrets of the Sealed Book.

Robert Govett, as far back as 1864, in commenting on the rejoicing in the city of Jerusalem over the death of the two witnesses who had been slain, especially the words, "And their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. And from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And they that dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and make merry; and they shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth" (Rev. 11:8, 9, 10) makes a statement that is nothing less than amazing:

It would seem as though certain persons of every nation were deputed to enter the city, and permitted to behold these slain witnesses, that they may testify the truth of the great fact, either to their own camp, or to their nations. The word (Βλεπω) denotes not merely the nations seeing them, but their directing their eyes to this great sight, and gazing upon them . . . "But how," it is asked, "is it conceivable that men all over the earth should be rejoicing at the news, when only three days and a half intervene between their death and resurrection?" . . . Is it not perfectly conceivable if the electric telegraph shall then have extended itself at the rate it has done of late years?

Bishop Moule, great scholar, equally great saint, once wrote out a confession of his own trust in the Word of God, which every Christian might do well to copy in his Bible. It is found in the life of the Bishop of Durham, *Handley Carr Glyn Moule,* by J. B. Harford and F. C. Macdonald (pp. 137, 138):

When my Lord Christ became a living and unutterably necessary Reality to me, I remember that one of my first sensations of profound relief was: "HE absolutely trusted the Bible, and though there are in it things inexplicable and intricate that have puzzled me so much, I am going, not in a blind sense, but reverently, to trust the Book because of HIM."

12

A CONSIDERATION OF SOME OF THE SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF THE GREAT COMMENTATOR, MATTHEW HENRY

Everyone acknowledges that the greatest devotional commentary ever written in the English language, the work that undoubtedly has exercised more influence over ministers of the Gospel than any other one commentary in our language, is the one written over two hundred years ago by Matthew Henry, of Chester, Hackney, and London, England. I have here in my hand a precious little volume from my library, which I greatly treasure, published two years after Matthew Henry died, in 1716, called, *An Account of the Life and Death of Mr. Matthew Henry, Minister of the Gospel at Hackney,* by W. T. (the initials used by W. Tong), who signs his name in the dedication of the book to Mrs. Matthew Henry. Before we look at this intimate little work, full of many refreshing and surprising paragraphs, we might, briefly, remind ourselves of Matthew Henry's career.

He was the second son of the famous Philip Henry, born in 1662, and throughout childhood was marked by physical weakness and a precocious love of learning. Matthew Henry never went to any of the great colleges of England, but studied law, and was admitted to Gray's Inn when twenty-three years of age. A year later, he began to preach in his father's neighborhood, and business taking him to Chester, in 1687, he was asked to settle there, after preaching in private houses, as a permanent minister. The same year he was privately ordained in London, by six ministers, at the house of

Sir Richard Steele, and began his ministry June 2 of that year at Chester.

Because of a refusal to obey an order of James II regarding nominating certain magistrates, he was forced to give up the church, where he was ministering with such success. A meeting-house was erected for Henry in Crook Lane, which was opened August 8, 1700. This was not what we would call a great church, the number of communicants only rising to about 350. He received a number of invitations to serve in various other churches, including London and Hackney, and was at last persuaded, by a second invitation, to go to Hackney in 1710. Matthew Henry died in 1714, when only fifty-two years of age.

He began his great commentary on the exposition of the Old and New Testaments in November, 1704. The first volume was published four years later. Four other volumes soon followed, down through 1710, bringing the work to the end of the Gospel of John. Before his death he completed his exposition of Acts, and after his death the work on the Epistles and Revelation, from his notes, was prepared by thirteen non-conformist divines, some of them quite distinguished in their day. The complete edition of his great work was first published in six volumes in 1811.

In a diary which he carefully kept, he made the following entry for October 18, 1675, when he was only thirteen years of age, in what he calls "A Catalogue of the Mercies of God." Recording his conversion three years earlier, he writes:

> "For Spiritual Mercies; for the Lord Jesus Christ, his incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension and Intercession, for Grace, Pardon, Peace, for the Word, the means of Grace, for Prayer, for good Instructions, for the Good I have got at any time under the Word, for any Succour and Help from God under Temptation, for Brokenness of Heart, for an Enlightening. Lord Jesus, I bless thee

for thy Word, for good Parents, for good Education, that I was taken into Covenant betimes in Baptism; and, Lord, I give thee thanks, that I am thine and will be thine.

"I think it was three Years ago that I began to be convinced, hearing a Sermon by my Father on Psalm 51:17. 'The Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit; a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.' I think it was that melted me, afterwards I began to enquire after Christ."

In the same diary, for December 7, 1673, in reporting a sermon which he heard his father preach that Lord's Day morning, the future commentator being only eleven years old at the time, he makes a statement concerning his love for the Word of God which we may call the spring from which all of his later wonderful works on the Scriptures proceeded:

"I love the Word of God, I esteem it above all, I find my Heart so inclined, I desire it as the Food of my Soul, I greatly delight in it, both in reading and hearing of it, and my Soul can witness subjection to it in some measure. I think I love the Word of God for the Purity of it; I love the Ministers and Messengers of the Word; I am often reading it; I rejoice in the good Success of it; all which were given me as Marks of true Love to the Word, in a Sermon that I lately heard on Psalm 119:140. 'Thy Word is very pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it.' "

Mr. Tong makes the following remarks concerning Matthew Henry's reasons for seeking ordination at the hands of these obscure men to whom we have previously referred:

"These were the reasons that determined Mr. Henry to seek for Ordination in the more despised way of the Presbyterians; and accordingly having applied himself to those Ministers in London to whom he was best known, and

some of them being very aged and very cautious, it was agreed to have all managed with great Privacy, and on the 9th of May the same Year, they met on this solemn Occasion; the Ordainers as well as the Ordained are all dead, and therefore you cannot expect so particular an Account of the Work of that Day, only this is certain, it was a good Day to the Church of God, and a good Service that was done that Day to the Souls of many; God had form'd and fashion'd Mr. Henry before that Day for Temple Service, as a chosen Vessel fit for his Master's use; that Day God sealed him, and sent him forth to that Service, and though (as we find now to our Sorrow) he was but an earthen Vessel, yet a rich Treasure was conveyed by him to the Souls of Men, and the Excellency of Power was of God and not of Man."

The same biographer gives us the following interesting account of the great commentator's method of expounding the Scriptures in his own pulpit, and as we read it we are bound to say to ourselves: "Would to God every village, town and city in our great land had just one expositor of the Word like Matthew Henry."

"He began with a short Invocation of the Name of God, begging Assistance and Acceptance, then he read a Portion of Scripture in Course, out of the Old Testament in the Morning, and the New in the Evening; he did not tie himself to go through a Chapter at once, but unless it was very short divided it into several Sections, according to the Subject Matter, which ordinarily consisted of about eight or ten Verses, more or less; then he gave a short but judicious and affectionate Exposition, sometimes drawing up the Verses read into a plain and proper Scheme, in which he was the most happy Man in the World; sometimes he would omit the Connection, and only go over the several Passages in their order, as the matter directed; he gave the

Sense, even where it was the most intricate, in a plain and familiar Expression, which not only made it intelligible, but pleasant and satisfactory to the Mind that received it; he omitted not to raise Practical Notes, proper to quicken the Heart to Duty, and to direct it in Duty.

"These his Family Expositions, some that were with him wrote down after him, all attended to them; and that he might engage them to that Attention, as soon as the Exposition was over, he required an Account of them, what they had observed and remembered; and it was pleasant to behold the young Children, how diligently they would listen, and how prettily and properly they would give an Account of what they had heard.

"After Exposition, some Part of a Psalm was constantly sung in the Morning as well as the Evening, the Morning and the Evening Sacrifice, as he used to call it; every one had a Book, and so neither the Sense nor the Melody suffered that interruption, which can scarcely be avoided where it is read Line by Line.

"Prayer succeeded Singing, and was performed by him, with an almost inimitable Liveliness of Affection, and Tenderness of Spirit, with great Propriety of Petitions to the Case of the Family, and of every one in it, and of his Friends that were so happy as to be present with him at that Duty; the State of the Nation and of the Church of God was never omitted, nor slightly touched upon; all was done without tedious Repetition."

Matthew Henry, we are told, "kept very close and constant to his Business of Expounding, and never omitted it, even on the Sacrament Day; in the time he was at Chester, he went through the whole Bible more than once, and by this means his People have been observed to excel in their Acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures."

As to the great theme which he ever kept before him in all

of his preaching, he enters this statement in his diary for November 20, 1690: "It is most pleasant to me to be preaching Christ. I am most in my element when I am preaching Christ and Him crucified."

In referring to a number of friends of his who seemed to have had no appreciation of the value of time, and frittered away so many hours of the day, he confessed, "I would not for anything live such a life for a few days together; I am always best when alone; no place like my own study; no company like good books, and especially the book of God."

Mr. Tong gives us an excellent idea of the commentator's own personal habits in husbanding every precious hour he could for the great work to which God had called him:

> "He was an early Riser, and put a great Value upon his Morning Time; he would often be in his Study by Five of the Clock in the Morning, and sometimes by Four, and continue there till Seven or Eight; and then after Family Worship and a short Refreshment go up again till Noon, and often after Dinner, till Four of the Clock, and then go out to visit the Sick, or his Friends on other Occasions; and in the Evening, after he had dismissed his family, would be for a considerable time in his Study: And such a Course as this closely follow'd for some Years, could not but produce considerable Improvements of that Time, which he took care to fill up with Duty. I do not find in all his Papers, that any thing created a greater Uneasiness than to be unnecessarily robb'd of his Studying time, nor any thing that he more severely reflects upon himself for, than suffering himself at any time to be unnecessarily diverted from his delightful Studies.
>
> "And I cannot but observe, that the more he advanced in Years, the more careful he was to redeem Time, and he complains the more sensibly of the Loss of it; tho' he was far from despising the Kindness of his Friends, yet you

may often hear him, when invited to their Houses, and entertained plentifully, and detained with variety of Company, repeating David's Wish, O that I had Wings like a Dove, for then I would fly away and be at rest. At another time when he had been diverted by much Company and a mixed Conversation for a whole Day to little Advantage, he writes at Night with much Concern, 'I look upon this as a lost Day, Lord forgive my trifling, I would rather preach twice every Day in the Week, than spend another Day so unprofitably.' I could add much more to this Purpose, but I think it is not needful; had not Mr. Henry been an extraordinary Husband of his Time, it would have been impossible for him to have done so much Work in it."

Listen to this confession of his own soul, written in 1703, as he writes in his own diary concerning the evils over which he seemed to have so little victory—yet he is over forty years of age:

"Unfixedness of Thought, a wretched Desultoriness; some speak of Time well spent in Thinking, but I find unless in Speaking, Reading or Writing, my Thinking doth not turn to much Account, tho' I have had Comfort in some broken good Thoughts, yet I can seldom fix my Heart to a Chain of them; O that the Thought of my Heart may be forgiven."

Speaking of his struggle with sin, on New Year's Day, 1705, he begins with this renewed dedication of himself to God:

"Not renouncing, but repeating and ratifying all my former Covenants with God, and lamenting it, that I have not lived up more closely to them; I do in the beginning of this New Year solemnly make a fresh Surrender of my self, my whole self, Body, Soul and Spirit, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, covenanting and promising, not in any Strength of my own, for I am very weak, but in the Strength of the

Grace of Jesus Christ, that I will endeavour this Year to stand compleat in all the Will of God.

"I know this is the Will of God, even my Sanctification; Lord grant that this Year I may be more holy, and walk more closely than ever in all holy Conversation; I earnestly desire to be filled with holy Thoughts, to be carried out in holy Affections, determined by holy Aims and Intentions, and governed in all my Words and Actions by holy Principles. O that a golden Thread of Holiness may run through the whole Web of this Year."

All of Matthew Henry's career we must not think was one success after another. As late as 1711 he complained, in a most pessimistic mood, yet a mood which every minister at one time or another knows:

"Tho' the People at Chester are a most loving People, and many of them have had, and have an exceeding Value for me and my Ministry, yet I have not been without my Discouragements there, and those such as have tempted me to think that my Work in that Place has been in a great Measure done; many that have been catechiz'd with us, and many that have been long Communicants with us, have left us, and very few have been added to us."

Constantly his expositions were on his heart. He labored at them unceasingly and with joy. "What work I have to do for Thee this year, O my God," he wrote in 1711, "I depend upon thy Grace throughly to furnish me for it, and to work all my Works in me; particularly to assist me in the great Work of my Expositions, that I may write nothing that is frivolous or foreign, nothing that is foolish or flat, that may give just Offence, or lead into any Mistakes; but that all may be clear and pertinent and affecting; that I may find out genuine Expositions, useful Observations, profitable Matter, and acceptable Words, if it shall please God to spare me tc go on with it."

We do not very often hear anything about Matthew Henry's own belief concerning the second advent of our Lord, and for this reason I trust my hearers will be glad to hear read the words with which he opened his diary on New Year's Day, 1704:

"This New Years Day I have in much Weakness, and compassed about with many Infirmities, upon my Knees made a fresh Surrender of myself, my whole self, all I am, all I have, all I can do, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my Creator, Owner, Ruler and Benefactor; all my Affections to be ruled by the Divine Grace, and all my Affairs overruled by the Divine Providence, so as I may not come short of glorifying God in this World, and being glorified with him in a better World.

"Confirming and ratifying all former Resignations of myself to God, and lamenting all the Disagreeableness of my Heart and Life therewith, and depending upon the Merit of the Redeemer to make this and all my other Services acceptable, and the Grace of the Sanctifier to enable me to make good these engagements, I again bind my Soul with a Bond to the Lord, and commit myself entirely to him; particularly, as to the Events of this Year which I am now entering upon, not knowing the Things that may abide me in it.

"If this Year should be a Year of continued Health and Comfort, I commit myself to the Grace of God to be preserved from carnal Security, and to be enabled in a Day of Prosperity to serve God with joy.

"If my Opportunities as a Minister, should be this Year continued, I commit my Studies, and Ministerial Labours at home and abroad, to the Blessing of God; having afresh consecrated them all to his Service and Honour, earnestly desiring Mercy of the Lord to be Faithful and Successful.

"If I should be this Year at any time tried with Doubts

concerning my Duty, I commit myself to the Divine Conduct, with an unbyass'd Desire, praying to know what God will have me to do, with a fixed Resolution by his Grace to follow his Direction in the Integrity of my Heart.

"If I should this Year be afflicted in my Body, Family, Name or Estate, I commit my All to the Divine Dispose; the Will of the Lord be done; only begging that the Grace of God may go along with the Providence of God in all my Afflictions, to enable me both to bear them well and to use them well.

"If this Year I should be disturbed or molested in the Exercise of my Ministry, if I should be silenced, or otherways suffer for well-doing, I commit the keeping of my Soul to God as to a faithful Creator; depending upon him to guide me in my Call to suffer, and to make that clear, and to preserve me from perplexing Snares; depending upon him to support and comfort me under my Sufferings, and to bring Glory to himself out of them, and then welcome his whole Will."

When he was lying ill, and knew that he had not long to live, someone asked him if he had a last word to say to the Christians of England, who had come to love him so dearly, and to look up to him for spiritual guidance. "Yes," he said, "he did have." This would be his last statement: "A life spent in the service of God and communion with Him is the most comfortable and pleasant life that anyone can live in this world." The next day he went to be at home with his Lord.

13

PAUL'S LOVE OF BOOKS

There is a verse tucked away, we might say, on the last page that Paul probably ever wrote, dictated in a dingy and damp prison at Rome, shortly before the Apostle's death, which, more than any other one sentence in all his writings, indicates his passionate love for books and especially for *The* Book. I refer to the words he wrote to Timothy (II Tim. 4:13)—"The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring, and the books, especially the parchments."

Only rarely does the Apostle, in all of his voluminous writings, speak of his university education, or of his intellectual pursuits. Standing before the multitude in Jerusalem he could declare that he was a man who, though born in Tarsus, was brought up in the city of Jerusalem "at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the strict manner of the law of the fathers." (Acts 22:3.) In the Second Epistle to the church at Corinth (11:6) he says that though he might be rude in speech, yet he was not "in knowledge." Later to the Galatians, in briefly summarizing his earlier life, he said he had "profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." (Gal. 1:14.)

Speaking to the Athenians he was able quickly to quote relevant lines from their own poets.

From these words, certainly, we at least gather that Paul was a diligent student, nor do we believe that he ever stopped being a hard student all the days of his mature life, in spite of his traveling, in spite of his imprisonment, in spite of all

the churches he founded, and all the correspondence he had to carry on.

In the first letter to Timothy, he admonished his son in the faith to (literally) "keep your mind on the reading" (4:13). And now he himself tells Timothy that his mind needs to peruse again the books and parchments which, for some reason, he had left at Troas.

I should like us to look at this verse in three different ways. First, let us ask ourselves exactly what these books and parchments may have been. Then, we might consider, for a moment, some of the more pertinent remarks of our great commentators on the verse itself, and then read together some wonderful lines from two of the greatest preachers of the English world in the nineteenth century on these words,—Charles Spurgeon and Alexander Whyte.

The word here translated *books* is a common one in the New Testament. It is the word *biblion* from which comes our word *bibliography,* meaning, the science of books, and, our much greater word, *Bible,* which means *The Book.* The word *bibliarion,* meaning a little book, is found four times in the tenth chapter of Revelation, and only there in the New Testament. The word *biblos* meaning a written book, a scroll, is found thirteen times in the New Testament, five of these times in the Book of Revelation. It is the word used in the very first verse of our New Testament. "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." It is the word used by the beloved physician, when speaking of the preaching of John the Baptist, which he tells us was predicted "in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet." (Luke 3:4.)

Almost always, outside of the Book of Revelation, it is a word used in reference to the Old Testament. The exact word Paul used in writing to Timothy—*biblion*—meaning a small book, or scroll, is used thirty-one times in the New

Testament, and frequently means simply *a written document,* like a bill of divorcement. Paul uses here then a word that is quite common in the New Testament, though one rarely used among New Testament writers, to refer simply to books as such.

The word translated *parchments,* however, occurs nowhere else in all the New Testament Scriptures. It is the word *membranas,* from which we derive our word *membrane.* These parchments were first made of dressed skins, at the city of Pergamum (and hence were called parchments, from the name of the city). Books generally were made of papyrus. Parchments being made of skin, were much more durable, and, for a while much more expensive, though later, papyrus came to be so extensively used, that it was difficult to secure, especially if the harvest of papyrus was short, and so the time ultimately came when parchment was even cheaper than papyrus.

Professor A. T. Robertson tells us that "at first both the papyrus and the parchment book would be made into a roll. Sometimes the parchment leaves would not be pasted together in a roll, but left in loose form. This may have been the case with the parchments that Paul had left with Carpus. The papyrus were rolls of pieces of papyrus glued together of any convenient length. The columns of writing would be unrolled as one read, while the part just read would be rolled up again. Sometimes the roll would be fastened to a stick at each end. There would often be a case for the roll. The book wrap would hold a number of these rolls, whether of papyrus or parchment. The leaves of parchment, if not bound together in a codex, would lie open in the book wrap." (A. T. Robertson's *Studies in the Text of the New Testament,* pp. 108–109.)

The question now arises as to exactly what these books were, which (probably) no man will be able to definitely de-

termine, while we are here on earth, with our limited knowledge. Paul gives really no hint of what they were, but, inasmuch as he distinguishes between the two, it has generally been thought that whatever the *books* were, the *parchments* were probably rolls of the Old Testament Scriptures, as Kenyon of the British Museum suggests, and many agree. (*Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts,* p. 94)

The late Walter Locke, in his *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (p. 118) says they might have been "possibly official copies of the Lord's words or early narratives." They could have been, and how wonderful it would be if we could be sure of this! Dr. A. T. Robertson, along this line (and he was a careful scholar), goes so far as to suggest that "it is possible that both of Luke's books—the Gospel, and the Acts—were in that book wrap. Paul's copies of Luke's books, presentation copies we might say, may have been in the bunch of books in Troas. It is more likely that he had also left there Greek and Latin manuscripts of favorite authors, poets, historians, and orators." (p. 111)

Canon Farrar, in his brilliantly written *Life and Work of St. Paul* (Volume II, pp. 571–572), helps us to reconstruct in our own minds something of the environment in which Paul wrote these words.

"Perhaps he had bought these books when he was a student in the school of Gamaliel at Jerusalem; or, they may have been given him by his wealthier converts. Among the parchments were possibly the precious rolls of Isaiah and the Psalms and the lesser Prophets, which father or mother had given him as a life-long treasure in the far-off happy days when, little dreaming of all that would befall him, he played, a happy boy, in the dear old Tarsian home. Dreary and long are the days—the evenings longer and drearier still—in that Roman dungeon; and it will be a deep joy to read once more how David and Isaiah in *their* deep troubles learnt as he had

learnt to suffer and be strong. . . . Perhaps he thinks he would like to give them as his parting bequest to Timothy himself, or to the modest and faithful Luke, that their true hearts may remember him when the sea of life flows smooth once more over the nameless grave. Poor inventory of a saint's possessions! Not worth one-hundredth part of what a buffoon would get for one jest in Caesar's palace, or an acrobat for a feat in the amphitheatre, but would he have exchanged them for the jewels of the adventurer Agrippa, or the purple of the unspeakable Nero?

"No, he is much more than content. His soul is joyful in God. If he has the cloke to keep him warm, and the books and parchments to teach and encourage, and Mark to help him in various ways, and if, above all, Timothy will come himself, then life will have shed on him its last rays of sunshine; and in lesser things, as well as in all greater, he will wait with thankfulness, even with exultation, the pouring out in libation of those last few drops of his heart's blood of which the rich, full stream has for these long years been flowing forth upon God's altar in willing sacrifice."

For some strange reason, the Church Fathers made very little use of this verse, and when they did quote it, they paid almost no attention to the clause speaking of books and parchments, but made all their comments upon the cloke.

When we come, however, to that peer of commentators of the sixteenth century—John Calvin—we have something entirely different, definite, and practical. These are Calvin's words, with his usual common sense.

"It is evident from this that the Apostle had not given over reading, though he was well preparing for death. Where are those who think that they have made so great progress that they do not need any more exercise? Which of them will dare to compare himself with Paul? Still more does this expression refute the madness of those men who, despising books and

condemning all reading, boast of nothing but their own divine inspirations. But let us know that this Apostle gives to all believers a recommendation of constant reading that they may profit by it."

Speaking of commentators, one of our own generation, without illuminating the text as much as we wish he had done, for he was easily able to do this,—the late Dr. Lenski—frankly faces the often-asked question whether a sentence mentioning such trivial things as a cloak and books is inspired. "Offence has been taken at the fact that Paul should mention such articles, especially the cloke. Some also ask whether inspiration is needed for a verse like this. The answer to the latter is that if inspiration is able to watch over what we admit as the great utterances of Scripture, why should it not guide also what some of us may admit the most minor ones? Certainly the Holy Spirit does not need the advice of men to tell him what to inspire, and what not. . . . Let the Holy Spirit judge regarding the importance. . . . Your comfortable circumstances and mine have not been those of all other believers." (R. C. H. Lenski: *The Interpretation of Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, Timothy,* etc. Columbus, Ohio, 1937, pp. 882–883)

The reading of Calvin's words, written in 1556, leads us to another great scholar of the Church of the very same generation, William Tindale, who twenty years before this was executed—October 6, 1536. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the only known letter we have of William Tindale was discovered in the Archives of the Council of Brabant, a letter written when the great martyr and scholar was in a prison at Vilvorde in Belgium, addressed to the Marquis of Bergen, Governor of the Council. Certainly Tindale knew, when he wrote this tender note of request, that another martyr fifteen centuries before had the very longings when he was in prison that he was experiencing, also

a prisoner of Jesus Christ. These are Tindale's words, and I give them as a precious parallel of the last words of the dying Paul.

"I believe, right worshipful, that you are not ignorant of what has been determined concerning me (by the Council of Brabant); therefore I entreat your lordship and that by the Lord Jesus, that if I am to remain here (in Vilvorde) during the winter, you will request the Procureur to be kind enough to send me from my goods which he has in his possession, a warmer cap, for I suffer extremely from cold in the head, being afflicted with a perpetual catarrh, which is considerably increased in this cell. A warmer coat also, for that which I have is very thin: also a piece of cloth to patch my leggings: my overcoat is worn out; my shirts are also worn out. He has a woollen shirt of mine, if he will be kind enough to send it. I have also with him leggings of thicker cloth for putting on above; he also has warmer caps for wearing at night. I wish also his permission to have a lamp in the evening, for it is wearisome to sit alone in the dark. *But above all, I entreat and beseech your clemency to be urgent with the Procureur that he may kindly permit me to have my Hebrew Bible, Hebrew Grammar, and Hebrew Dictionary, that I may spend my time with that study.* And in return, may you obtain your dearest wish, provided always it be consistent with the salvation of your soul. But if, before the end of the winter, a different decision be reached concerning me, I shall be patient, abiding the will of God to the glory of the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit, I pray, may ever direct your heart." (William Tindale: *A Biography,* pp. 537–538)

Now, if I may, let me come for a moment to some modern sermons on this text. Strange to say, there are not many, and most of them, as with the Church Fathers, deal not with the books, but with the cloke. Some of them become quite fanciful, and give those using the text a handle for preaching

on such subjects as "On Leaving Things Behind" or "Luggage Left Behind." The only two sermons of the last century that I have discovered dealing directly with Paul's request for these books and parchments are in the writings of two men, both preaching in London; one in the middle of the nineteenth century, and the other in the first quarter of the twentieth century—Charles Spurgeon and Dinsdale T. Young. To speak of the last first, Dinsdale Young preached to 3,000 people every Sunday in Westminster Hall, London, and was one of the great adornments of British Methodism for half a century. I will never forget the night I heard him in his own pulpit in London, then an old man, who had to hold his notes very close to his eyes when it was necessary to read a sentence or two. But the difference between Young's preaching and Spurgeon's preaching—and Young was a great preacher, and his volumes of sermons are worth reading—is clearly discerned even in their respective treatments of such a text as this. Young begins his sermon on our text with a brilliant brief paragraph, and then that is about all one needs to remember from his sermon. These are his words: "One of the great presuppositions of the Bible is that God's people will read. The existence of Scripture is in itself an argument for the necessity of reading. That God inspired a book indicates His desire that His servants should be readers." (*Messages for Home and Life,* London, 1907, p. 61)

Mr. Spurgeon preached on this text at the Metropolitan Tabernacle on Sunday morning, November 29, 1863. The first two-thirds of the sermon have to do with Paul's request for a cloke, and I think that his seven pages on this single clause are the finest pages in the English language on this particular portion of Paul's writings. It would be a grand thing sometime if one with much leisure and a love for books and a discerning spirit, would give us a great series of volumes in which the very finest things said on each particular phrase

in the New Testament were brought together. These are Spurgeon's words:

"We will LOOK AT HIS BOOKS. We do not know what the books were about, and we can only form some guess as to what the parchments were. Paul had a few books which were left, perhaps wrapped up in the cloak, and Timothy was to be careful to bring them. *Even an apostle must read.* Some of our very ultra-Calvinistic brethren think that a minister who reads books and studies his sermon must be a very deplorable specimen of a preacher. A man who comes up into the pulpit, professes to take his text on the spot, and talks any quantity of nonsense, is the idol of many. If he will speak without premeditation, or pretend to do so, and never produce what they call a dish of dead men's brains—oh! that is the preacher. How rebuked are they by the apostle! He is inspired, and yet he wants books! He has been preaching at least for thirty years, and yet he wants books! He has seen the Lord, and yet he wants books! He had had a wider experience than most men, and yet he wants books! He had been caught up into the third heaven, and had heard things which it was unlawful for a man to utter, yet he wants books! He had written the major part of the New Testament, and yet he wants books! The apostle says to Timothy and so he says to every preacher, 'Give thyself unto reading.' The man who never reads will never be read; he who never quotes will never be quoted. He who will not use the thoughts of other men's brains, proves that he has no brains of his own. Brethren, what is true of ministers is true of all our people. *You* need to read. Renounce as much as you will all light literature, but study as much as possible sound theological works, especially the Puritanic writers, and expositions of the Bible. We are quite persuaded that the very best way for you to be spending your leisure, is to be either reading or praying. You may get much instruction from books which afterwards you

may use as a true weapon in your Lord and Master's service. Paul cried, 'Bring the books'—join in the cry.

"Our second remark is, that *the apostle is not ashamed to confess that he does read.* He is writing to his young son Timothy. Now, some old preachers never like to say a thing which will let the young ones into their secrets. They suppose they must put on a very dignified air, and make a mystery of their sermonizing; but all this is alien from the spirit of truthfulness. Paul wants books, and is not ashamed to tell Timothy that he does; and Timothy may go and tell Tychicus and Titus if he likes—Paul does not care.

"Paul herein is a picture of industry. He is in prison; he cannot preach: what will he do? As he cannot preach, he will read. As we read of the fishermen of old and their boats. The fishermen were gone out of them. What were they doing? Mending their nets. So if providence has laid you upon a sick bed, and you cannot teach your class—if you cannot be working for God in public, mend your nets by reading. If one occupation is taken from you, take another, and let the books of the apostle read you a lesson of industry.

"He says, *'especially the parchments.'* I think the books were Latin and Greek works, but that the parchments were Oriental; and possibly they were the parchments of Holy Scripture; or as likely, they were his own parchments, on which were written the originals of his letters which stand in our Bible as the Epistles to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, and so on. Now, it must be *'especially the parchments'* with all our reading; let it be *especially the Bible.* Do you attach no weight to this advice? This advice is more needed in England now than almost at any other time, for the number of persons who read the Bible, I believe, is becoming smaller every day. Persons read the views of their denominations as set forth in the periodicals; they read the views of their leader as set forth in his sermons or his works,

but the Book, the good old Book, the divine fountain-head from which all revelation wells up—this is too often left. You may go to human puddles, until you forsake the clear crystal stream which flows from the throne of God. Read the books, by all manner of means, but especially the parchments. Search human literature, if you will, but especially stand fast by that Book which is infallible, the revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (*Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit,* 1863, pp. 668, 669)

Now let me come to what, if I may so say, is the best of all, the greatest thing ever done in our language, and probably that ever will be done in reference to Paul as a student, and the bearing of this fact on our being students of the best books, and most of all of *THE* Book. I take these words from Alexander Whyte's marvelous, moving volume, *The Apostle Paul.*

"I really wish I could prevail with you who are no longer young to put aside, as Butler beseeches you, your books and papers of mere amusement, and to read Cicero's *Cato,* and some of the other old age classics, if only to make those fine books to serve for so many foils in a fresh perusal of the Epistles of the Imprisonment. It is our bounden duty to read a Greek or a Roman masterpiece now and then, such as the *Phaedo* or the *Cato,* if only to awaken ourselves again to the immensity of the change that came into this world with the Incarnation and the Resurrection of our Lord. What a contrast between philosophy at its very best in Socrates and Cicero, and the Gospel of our salvation unto everlasting life in Paul's old age Epistles! The whole truth and beauty and nobility of such books as the best of Plato and Cicero is all needed the better to bring out the inconceivable contrast between this world at its very best before Christ, and the new heavens and the new earth that our Lord brought to this world with Him and left in this world behind Him. How

such glorious passages as these shine out afresh upon us after we have just laid down the *Cato* and even the *Phaedo*. . . .

"Well; after repeated readings lately of the Cato and the Epistles of the Imprisonment, and the Art of Dying Well, and Jeremy Taylor, and suchlike authors for old age, I will now tell you some of the reflections, impressions, and resolutions, that have been left on my own mind. And take first Paul's so touching message to Timothy about his cloke, and his books, and his parchments. For all that comes in most harmoniously after we have just been reading *Cato* about our keeping on reading and writing our best to the end. . . .

"And if I might be bold enough to add one word after Calvin. I am not now, alas! a neophyte in these matters, and I will therefore take boldness to say this to you. Read the very best books, and only the very best, and ever better and better the older you grow. Be more and more select, and fastidious, and refined, in your books and in your companions, as old age draws on, and death with old age. I wonder just what books they were that Paul missed so much in his imprisoned and apostolic old age at Rome? It might have been the *Apology*. It might have been the *Cato Major*. It could not possibly have been Moses, or David, or Isaiah, or Micah. You may depend upon it, Paul did not forget his Bible when he was packing his trunk at Troas. You are far better off in the matter of books for your old age than Paul was with his Bible and all. Never, then, be out of your Old, and especially, never be out of your New Testament. As Paul says about prayer, read in your New Testament without ceasing. Never lay it down, unless it is to take up another letter of Samuel Rutherford, or another pilgrim's crossing of the river; or, if you have head enough left for it, another great chapter of the *Saint's Rest*. Nothing else. At least, nothing less pertinent and appropriate to your years and to your immediate prospects. Nothing less noble. Nothing less worthy of yourself. Nothing at all but

just those true classics of the eternal world over and over again, till your whole soul is in a flame with them, and till your rapture into heaven seizes upon you with one of them in your hand."

"Saul of Tarsus, like Timothy of Lystra, from a child knew the Holy Scriptures. And thus, no doubt, there was found among his old parchments after his death a Table of Rules and Regulations for his college conduct in Jerusalem, as good as William Law's Rules for his college conduct in Cambridge; better Rules they could not be. But there is one possibility in Saul's student days in Jerusalem that makes our hearts beat fast in our bosoms to think of it. 'And the Child grew,' we read in a contemporary biography, 'and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. Now His parents went up to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And it came to pass after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions.' Now Gamaliel would be almost sure to be one of those astonished doctors; and what more likely than that he had taken his best scholar up to the temple to explain the passover to him that day? And did not the young carpenter from Nazareth, and the young weaver from Tarsus, exchange glances of sympathy and shake hands of love that day at the gate of the temple? Are there sports of providence like that in the Divine Mind? asked one of his likeminded students of Rabbi Duncan one day. Yes, and No, was the wise old doctor's answer.

"Now the first instruction, as I think, intended to us out of Saul's student days is this—that the finest minds in every generation should study for the Christian ministry. Perhaps the very finest mind that had been born among men since the beginning of the world entered on the study of Old

Testament theology when Saul of Tarsus sat down at Gamaliel's feet. And all Saul's fine and fast maturing mind will soon be needed now. For a work lay before that weaver boy of Tarsus second only to the work that lay before that carpenter boy of Nazareth, though second to that by an infinite interval. At the same time, there has been no other work predestinated to mere mortal man to do for God and man to be spoken of in the same day with this weaver's boy's foreordained work. For even after the Lamb of God had said of His work,—it is finished! how unfinished and incomplete our New Testament would have been without the life and the work of the Apostle Paul. There was a deep harmony preestablished from all eternity between the work of Jesus Christ, and the mind and the heart of Paul His apostle. No other subject in all the world but the Divine Person and the redeeming work of Jesus Christ could have afforded an outlet and an opportunity and an adequate scope for Paul's magnificent mind. While, on the other hand, the law of God and the cross of Christ would have remained to this day but half-revealed mysteries, had it not been for God's revelation of His Son in Paul; and had it not been for Paul's intellectual and spiritual capacity to receive that revelation, and to expound it and preach it. Every man who has read Paul's Epistles with the eyes of his understanding in light, and with his heart on fire, must have continually exclaimed, What a gift to a man is a fine mind, and that mind wholly given up to Jesus Christ! Let our finest minds, then, devote themselves to the study of Christology. Other subjects may, or may not, be exhausted; other callings may, or may not, be overcrowded; but there is plenty of room in the topmost calling of all, and there is an ever-opening and ever-deepening interest there. No wonder, then, that it has been a University tradition in Scotland that our finest minds have all along entered the Divinity Hall. The other walks and callings of human life both need, and will

reward, the best minds that can be spared to them, but let the service of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ first be filled. To annotate the Iliad, or the Symposium, or the Commedia; to build up and administer an empire; to command in a battle for freedom by sea or by land; to create and bequeath a great and enriching business; to conduct an influential newspaper; to be the rector of a great school, and so on,—these are all great services done to our generation when we have the talent, and the character, and the opportunity, to do them. But to master Paul, as Paul mastered Moses and Christ; to annotate, and illustrate, and bring freshly home to ten thousand readers, the Galatians, or the Romans, or the Colossians; to have eyes to see what Israel ought to do, and to have the patience, and the courage, to lead a great church to do it; to feed, and to feed better and better for a lifetime, the mind and the heart of a congregation of God's people, and then to depart to be with Christ,—let the finest minds and the deepest and richest hearts in every new generation fall down while they are yet young and say, Lord Jesus, what wilt Thou have me to do with my life, and with whatsoever talents Thou hast intrusted to me?

"And, then, the best of all callings being chosen, the better his mind and the better his heart are, the more profit, to employ Paul's own word about himself, will be made by the true student. For one thing, the better his mind, the more industrious, as a rule the student of divinity will be. And the absolutely utmost industry in this supreme department of study is simply imperative and indispensable. An unindustrious divinity student should be drummed out of the Hall as soon as he is discovered intruding himself into it. With what a hunger for his books, and with what heavenward vows and oaths of work young Saul would set out from Tarsus to Jerusalem! Our own best students come up to our divinity seats with thrilling and thanksgiving hearts, and it is only

they who have such hearts who can at all enter into Saul's mind and heart and imagination as he descended Olivet and entered Jerusalem and saw his name set down at last on Gamaliel's roll of the sons of the prophets. Gamaliel would have no trouble with Saul, unless it was to supply him with books, and to answer his questions. 'In all my experience I never had a scholar like Saul of Tarsus,' Gamaliel would often afterwards say. And Saul's class-fellows would tell all their days what a help and what a protection it was to be beside Saul. 'We entered the regent's class that year,' writes James Melville in his delightful Diary, 'and he took up Aristotle's *Logic* with us. He had a little boy that served him in his chambers, called David Elistone, who, among thirty-six scholars, so many were we in the class, was by far the best. This boy he caused to wait on me and confer with me, and well it was for me, for his genius and his judgment passed mine as far as the eagle the owlet. In the multiplication of propositions, in the conversion of syllogisms, in the pons asinorum, etc., he was as well read as I was in counting my fingers. This, I mark as a special cause of thankfulness.' And young Saul of Tarsus would be just another David Elistone in Gamaliel's school. And you Edinburgh students of divinity must be as industrious and as successful as ever Saul was in Jerusalem, or little Elistone in St. Andrews. And you have far more reason. For you have far better teachers, and a far better subject, and a far better prospect, than ever Saul had. You are not eternally fore-ordained, indeed, to write the Epistle to the Romans, or the Epistle to the Ephesians. But you are chosen, and called, and matriculated, to do the next best thing to that. You are called to master those masterpieces of Paul, so as to live experimentally upon them all your student life, and then you are to teach and preach them to your people better and better all your pulpit and pastoral life. You are to work with your hands, if need be; you are to sell

your bed, if need be, as Coleridge commands you, in order to buy Calvin on the Romans, and Luther on the Galatians, and Goodwin on the Ephesians, and Davenant on the Colossians, and Hooker on Justification, and 'that last word on the subject,' Marshall's *Gospel Mystery of Sanctification;* and you are to husband-up your priceless and irrecoverable hours to such studies, as you shall give account at the day of a divinity student's judgment. You are to feed your people, when you have got them committed of Christ to your charge, with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock. And that, better and better all your life, till your proud people shall make their boast in God about you, as the proud people of Anwoth made their boast about that great genius, and great scholar, and great theologian, and great preacher, and great pastor, Master Samuel Rutherford.

" 'Give attendance to reading,' was Paul's old-age reminiscence of his student days, in the form of a counsel to young Timothy. 'Paul has not lost his delight in books, even when he is near his death,' says Calvin. And I myself owe so much to good books that I cannot stop myself on this subject as long as I see a single student sitting before me. I have a thousand times had Thomas Boston's experience of good books. 'I plied my books. After earnestly plying my books, I felt my heart begin to grow better. I always find that my health and my heart are the better according as I ply my books.' But you will correct me that Paul could not ply the great books that Thomas Boston plied to his own salvation, and to the salvation of his people in Simprin and Ettrick. Well, then, all the more, ply your pure Bible as Paul and Timothy did, and your profiting, like Paul's profiting and Timothy's, will soon appear unto all. Plying your English Bible even, your profiting will soon appear in your English style, both spoken and written. It will appear in the scriptural stateliness and the holy order of your pulpit prayers also. Your profiting will

appear also in the strength, and the depth, and the spirituality, and the experimentalness, and the perennial freshness, of your teaching and your preaching."

"Up, and abolish death. Up, out of your bondage all your days through fear of death. Up, and practise dying in the Lord, till you take the prize. Up, and read Paul without ceasing, and pray without ceasing, till you also shall stand on tiptoe with expectation and with full assurance of faith. Yes; up, till you also shall salute His sudden coming, and shall exclaim, Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!" (*The Apostle Paul,* by Alexander Whyte, pp. 174–175; 176–177; pp. 14–21; p. 181)

14

THE PASSING OF H. G. WELLS

In the year 1946, on August 13, there passed away at his home in London the man whom the New York Times, in an obituary editorial, has called, and probably not without exaggeration, "the greatest public teacher of his time." Mr. Wells was seventy-nine years of age at the time of his death, and was afflicted for a long period with diabetes. I do not wish to discuss the literary merits of his vast output in this chapter, nor investigate the brilliant prophecies which he made early in our century of many of the mechanical marvels and weapons of destruction which have been so amazingly fulfilled before our eyes. It is unnecessary to remind my hearers that Mr. Wells had a greater influence over the thinking of mankind in general, especially in Great Britain and America, during the last forty years than any other one man—at least over the mind of the masses. His *Outline of History* alone sold three million copies, a phenomenal figure for a work in history, never reached even by Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* which has now been in circulation for two hundred years. We will consider only two aspects of Mr. Wells' life: his bitter, blasphemous denunciation of everything pertaining to God and the Lord Jesus, and his wrathful animosity toward the Holy Scriptures.

I remember when a young man in my early 20's, the book, *The Salvaging of Civilization,* appeared, just after the close of the first World War, in which Mr. Wells has a chapter that was quoted, discussed, and debated in literary and religious

journals throughout the world at the time on the subject, which was not new with him and probably did not die with him, do we need a new Bible? Mr. Wells said that we did; in fact, he suggested that men ought to get together and write a new Bible. Perhaps he thought he would write one, but he has left us no new Bible; neither will any group of men working together for any length of time ever give us anything to compare with the Holy Word of God.

It is, however, in his autobiography, published in 1934 at the age of sixty-five, *Experiment in Autobiography: Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain (since 1866)*, a work running to over 300,000 words, that Mr. Wells says—as far as I have read in his writings—the most terrible things about God. Some of them I cannot repeat, not wishing to soil the mind with the foulness that came from his pen.

"I was indeed a prodigy of Early Impiety. I was scared by hell. I did not first question the existence of Our Father, but no fear, nor terror could prevent my feeling that His All Seeing Eye was that of an Old Sneak, and that the Atonement, for which I had to be so grateful, was either an imposture, a trick of self-immolation or a crazy nightmare. . . . It must be hard for intelligent people nowadays to realize all that a shabby boy of fifteen could feel as the last rack of a peevish Son-Crucifying Deity dissolved away in a blue sky, and, as the implacable social barriers, as they had seemed, did to keep him in that path into which it had pleased that God to call him; weakened down to contemporary fences, he could see over, and, presently, perhaps, hope to climb over or push aside. . . . Jesus was some fine sort of man, perhaps, the Jewish Messiah was a promise of leadership, but clumsily or smoothly, the world it seems progresses and will progress. Our Saviour of the Trinity is a dressed-up, inconsistent effigy of amiability, a monstrous hybrid of men, an infinity making

significant promises of helpful miracles for the cheating of simple souls, an ever absent help in times of trouble."

What I would like to ask here—and what I think every person ought to ask upon reading such statements as these—is, what did this hatred of God, this repudiation of the Scriptures do for Mr. Wells? His autobiography reveals some of the tragic consequences of such unbelief, and I tarry for a moment to bring them to your attention. Twice, on the first page of his book, he speaks of "the hope of release," and "this craving for a release from brothers." Then he speaks of the longing "to escape from individual immediacies," and of "seeking to emancipate ourselves from long-accepted and long untouched necessities." He says he is "intolerably hampered by irrelevant necessities," and talks about the "quite desperate effort to disentangle ourselves." Our object, he says, ought to be "to master our world and release its imprisoned promise" (p. 12). (How wonderfully the last phrase of this sentence has truly been made possible in the Redemption that we have in Jesus Christ!) He talks about "the liberty of our lives and the freedom of our brains" (p. 447). He believed that we ought to set ourselves "to rescue human society from the net of tradition in which it is entangled, and to reconstruct it upon planetary lines" (p. 549). This, he believes, would be "the attainment of universal freedom" (p. 702). At the very close of his book, he is still longing for "an escape from individual vexations and frustrations, from the petty, overwhelming pains, anxieties, and recriminations of the too acutely ego-centered life" (p. 706). What an amazing confession this last sentence is! Every life outside of Christ is certainly an "acutely ego-centered life." That is what Christ came to deliver us from—from ourselves, and our selfishness, and our enslavements. He came that we might have life; that we might have it more abundantly; that we might know the truth, and by the truth be set free; that we might walk in the liberty of the sons of

God. The whole purpose of the Advent of the Son of God, the necessity for it, the profound need for it, the inability to satisfy that need in any other way, is certainly discovered again, discovered in a powerful way, tragically undeniable in the pages that reveal the inner life of a great figure such as Mr. Wells must be acknowledged to have been.

The second unsatisfied longing of this man's heart was for peace. He speaks of a "hope of a period of serene activity." He wants "peace for work." He confesses, "The time has come to reorganize my peace," and then, conscious of his own inability to find what he so much wants, what he wants more than anything else in the world, he cries out: "I cannot adjust my life to secure any fruitful peace." "Here I am at sixty-five, still seeking for peace." "There is no rest-house before the goal." "That dignified peace . . . is just a helpful dream" (pp. 1–8). What restlessness breaks out now and then as we carefully follow the moods of Mr. Wells' inner life! We quote only one instance: "A phase of great restlessness came upon me in 1923–24. I was doing what I felt to be good work in making a digest of modern knowledge and ideas available for the general reader, but this did not fully engage my imagination. I could not subdue myself to the idea that this was the limit of my effectiveness. I made speeches and, when I read the reports of them, I could not believe I had said so little. I gave interviews and was overwhelmed by a sense of fatuity when they came home to roost. I was oppressed by a sense of encumbrance in my surroundings . . . and time running to seed" (p. 631).

But the pessimism of these pages of ten years ago is nothing compared to the last writing of this remarkably gifted man. I very rarely allow myself to make such a statement as that God allowed a man to live just so long, so as to show this or that, though probably it would often be true; but I really believe that God gave Mr. Wells, in spite of his long and

severe affliction of diabetes, time enough to write his last book, a small volume of less than forty pages, the most despairing cry, the most agonizing scream of utter hopelessness that can be found coming from any intellectual leader of the 20th century. Even the title of Mr. Wells' book is horribly pessimistic—and no man could conceive suggestive titles as H. G. Wells. This book he calls *Mind at the End of Its Tether.* The first paragraph of the Preface inform us: "This little book brings to a conclusive end the series of essays, memoranda, pamphlets, through which the writer has experimented, challenged discussion, and assembled material bearing upon the fundamental nature of life and time. So far as fundamentals go, he has nothing more and never will have anything more to say."

Now let us look at the opening sentence of the first chapter, to which he gives the title, "The End Closes in upon Mind." "The writer finds very considerable reason for believing that, within a period to be estimated by weeks and months rather than by aeons, there has been a fundamental change in the conditions under which life, not simply human life but all self-conscious existence, has been going on since its beginning. This is a very startling persuasion to find establishing itself in one's mind, and he puts forward his conclusions in the certainty that they will be entirely inacceptable to the ordinary rational man. If his thinking has been sound, then this world is at the end of its tether. The end of everything we call life is close at hand and cannot be evaded."

"The writer is convinced that there is no way out or round or through the impasse. It is the end."

"Our world of self-delusion will admit none of that. It will perish amidst its evasions and fatuities. It is like a convoy lost in darkness or an unknown rocky coast, with quarrelling pirates in the chartroom and savages clambering up the sides of the ships to plunder and do evil as the whim may take them.

That is the rough outline of the more and more jumbled movie on the screen before us. Mind near exhaustion still makes its final futile movement toward that 'way out or round or through the impasse.' "

The third chapter is a repudiation of all that he referred to in his famous work, *The Shape of Things to Come.* He heads this chapter, "There is No Pattern of Things to Come," and the first paragraph is as follows: "Our universe is not merely bankrupt; there remains no dividend at all; it has not simply liquidated; it is going clean out of existence, leaving not a wrack behind. The attempt to trace a pattern of any sort is absolutely futile."

At the end of the book, we have Mr. Wells' final verdict: "The writer sees the world as a jaded world devoid of recuperative power. In the past he has liked to think that Man could pull out of his entanglements and start a new creative phase of human living. In the face of our universal inadequacy, that optimism has given place to a stoical cynicism. The old men behave for the most part meanly and disgustingly, and the young are spasmodic, foolish and all too easily misled. Man must go steeply up or down and the odds seem to be all in favour of his going down and out. Ordinary man is at the end of his tether. Only a small, highly adaptable minority of the species can possibly survive. The rest will not trouble about it, finding such opiates and consolations as they have a mind for. Let us then conclude this speculation about the final phase in the history of life, by surveying the modifications of the human type that are in progress today (p. 30) . . . . It is possible that the mass of contemporary mankind may not be as readily accessible to fresh ideas as the younger, more childish minds of earlier generations, and it is also possible that hard imaginative thinking has not increased so as to keep pace with the expansion and complication of human societies and organisations. That is the darkest shadow

upon the hopes of mankind. But my own temperament makes it unavoidable for me to doubt, as I have said, that there will not be that small minority which will succeed in seeing life out to its inevitable end."

The New York Times said of Mr. Wells, that "he was the greatest public teacher of his day." But he couldn't teach himself the way of peace, and with all of his knowledge, with all of his wealth, with all of his fame, with all of his great gifts, the dawn of the atomic age meant the destruction of all of his hopes, the eclipse of all of his dreams, and nothing but darkness and despair ahead, as the Apostle Paul said centuries ago, for to be without God is to be without hope in this world. Let a man close his mind to the truth, and the violent, bewildering, convulsive events of a day such as ours will drive him mad. The wisdom of this world will never bring a man peace and give him life; we need God, and only those who have the Word of God in their hearts, and hands, and minds know the meaning of "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." In fact, Mr. Wells almost confesses this himself, though it is expressed in bitter sarcasm. This is what he says: "It takes a priest's assurance, the confident assertion of a leader, a misapplied text—the Bible, bless it! will say any old thing one wants it to say if only one picks out what one needs, or, better, if one lets one's religious comforters pick out the suitable passages—so that one never sees it as a whole. In that invincible ignorance of the dull mass lies its immunity to all the obstinate questioning of the disgruntled mind" (pp. 7–8). Stripping this sentence of all of its bitter, unfair, false, and sarcastic turns, what does Mr. Wells mean but that it is only the man with a Bible who can be delivered from "the obstinate questioning of a disgruntled mind." Now call the Bible what you will, it seems to me that a book which can keep a man steady in a day like this, that can keep the light of hope

burning when the hopes of so many have been blasted forever, that can deliver man from fear and fill his heart with peace—it seems to me that a book which can do that, after nearly two thousand years of a healing, comforting, delivering mission can be nothing else but the Word of God, a message from heaven, the food that our souls need. The life and work, the hatreds and final despair of this foremost seer of our modern age come as a permanent testimony to the inability of the natural man to attain what satisfies the depths of his nature, and stands forever a living witness to the truth spoken long ago, that "by wisdom the world knows not God," and that without hope "we are of all men most miserable."

15

WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND DEVOTION TO THE BIBLE OF YALE'S MOST BELOVED PROFESSOR

About two years ago there passed away in his home in New Haven, Connecticut, at the age of seventy-eight, the most famous Professor of English literature of our generation, who probably gave more lectures outside of his class room on the great themes of English literature than any other one man of this century—William Lyon Phelps, for forty years a teacher in Yale University, and for over thirty years holding the Chair of Lampson Professor of English literature in addition to being the public orator of Yale.

I think it is not an exaggeration to say that Professor Phelps said more things about the Bible worth saying, and wrote more in an interesting way about the Word of God, and consistently bore a more definite testimony to his faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and his belief in the Gospel, than any other one famous professor in the United States since the beginning of the Twentieth Century. It is for this reason, because of his remarkable testimony to the truthfulness and power and interest of the Word of God and to the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, that I would like to devote the first three of this new series of "Chats From a Minister's Library" to the one whose obituary all America has read.

The material I am using is gathered from his one-thousand page *Autobiography with Letters,* published by the Oxford University Press in 1939; his small book, *Reading the Bible,* consisting of the L. P. Stone Lectures at Princeton Theo-

logical Seminary in 1919, published by the Macmillan Company of New York City, and two larger volumes published soon after—*Human Nature and the Gospel,* and, *Human Nature in the Bible,* both published by Charles Scribner's Sons of New York, together with a remarkable article, one of the most powerful testimonies to Christ from a great scholar in this country which appeared in the Christian Herald for February 1931.

I wish to express my deep appreciation to the publishers of all this material for their permission to use liberally the material found in these volumes. All but Dr. Phelps' *Autobiography* are now out of print.

Before considering Dr. Phelps' remarkable statements concerning the Bible, and his conviction regarding its eternal preeminence, I would like in this initial expression to consider somewhat Dr. Phelps' life as a whole, and especially the Christian training which he found in his father's home.

William Lyon Phelps was born in New Haven, Connecticut, January 2, 1865, the son of the Rev. S. Dryden Phelps, a Baptist clergyman. This is what, at the age of sixty-six, Dr. Phelps had to say about his early home training:

"In the first place, I was brought up in a Christian home, and came of a long line of Christian ancestors. This does not explain why I am a Christian now, but it helps to explain why being a Christian never seemed to me either queer or absurd. My father was a Baptist minister; my mother was a Sunday School teacher, and her father was a Baptist minister. Both my father and my maternal grandfather were Fundamentalists, orthodox in every respect: they believed in heaven and hell, and they believed that every word of the Old and New Testament was true.

"Sunday was kept with Puritanical strictness. As early as I could walk, I went to church in the morning, to Sunday School after church, and to young people's prayer-meeting

immediately after an early supper, followed by a preaching service; and of course it was obligatory to attend the week-night prayer meeting. Once and only once my brother and I played hookey and went coasting on the snow; my parents greeted our arrival home more in sorrow than in anger, and they really seemed to feel so distressed we never deceived them in that way again.

"You will see that I was brought up in just the way to make an atheist or church-hater, according to those who have never passed through similar experiences, and merely guess at their result; but instead of being an atheist, I have always been a Christian, and have joyfully gone to church all my life.

"There were two factors in my boyhood at home that help to account for this. Although my father and mother were strict, orthodox evangelicals, they were not in the least personally like the caricatures of such people seen on our modern stage. Both father and mother were full of fun; we were always laughing and joking at every meal, we lived in chronic affectionate intimacy, and although we had so little money there were no luxuries, they were very generous to us at Christmas, New Year, and on birthdays; all of which feasts were tremendous occasions in our household, prepared for with mysterious delights weeks ahead of the delirious date.

"I loved my mother devotedly, and adored my father. He was a big man, taller and heavier than I am now; he had been brought up on a farm, was physically very strong, fond of all kinds of outdoor games; he took me out shooting when I was hardly big enough to walk.

"All small boys imitate their heroes. My chief hero was my father; and as he was a professional preacher, I began imitating him in a professional capacity when I was only seven years old. On Sunday afternoons the entire family would gather together to hear me preach. During the week I would write out a four-page sermon, which, however deficient in

original thought, was theologically sound; this I would read with all the eloquence I could command. I also gave out the hymns, which were dutifully sung by father, mother, and my two brothers. Once the entire service collapsed owing to the fact that my ocular familiarity with words was greater than my auricular knowledge. I was reading aloud the hymn; I came to the line—Deep horror then my vitals froze—and I had the misfortune to pronounce vitals as if it were spelled *victuals.* This shock was too much for the family; it was greeted with unrestrained roars of laughter; and I was obliged to close the service, though I saw nothing to laugh at, and thought father and mother were frivolous to be so diverted in a church service.

"We, of course, had family prayers every morning and every evening, including the singing of a hymn at night; and naturally my father said grace before every meal. I mention all these things to show that I never had to be introduced to the Christian religion; I grew up in an atmosphere of prayer and unaffected intimacy with God." (Article III)

Professor Phelps, early in life, showed a capacity for being powerfully moved by the great masterpieces of English literature, and of course if a man is not moved by them he can never become such a passionate advocate of reading the great literary classics as Phelps became, nor can he move others if he himself has not been powerfully moved. He tells us in his *Autobiography* that when he was a freshman at Yale in 1884 (only nineteen years old) that he was assigned the task of writing a synopsis of some essay, and he chose Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship.* What that book did for him that Spring of 1884 he tells us in the following words:

"There are spiritual experiences we would not have missed for anything. They are worth more than years of routine existence. In an hour the soul rises to a higher plane, and, despite temporary lapses, one can never live again perma-

nently on the lower level. The mind leaps to an elevation. That afternoon in my room on the top floor of the old North Middle, as I absorbed 'The Hero as Man of Letters,' I was caught up into an ecstasy. There is no other word which truly describes my state of mind. The pages of the book seemed to me aflame, and the fire consumed me utterly. When I came to read my paper in the classroom, the spell was still upon me. I trembled with excitement, and could hardly read the words I had written. Professor Northrop, who had probably expected a perfunctory report, looked at me with astonishment. His talent for ironical comment had made him a terror both to slackers and to gushers; if he had chilled my holy enthusiasm with his famous icy disdain, I should never have forgiven him. But apparently he discerned that my uncontrollable enthusiasm was sincere; that I was really under the domination of the genius of Carlyle. I have not forgotten his brief but emphatic word of commendation."

Again in his sophomore year, in November, he chose from a number of subjects assigned for a group of essays, "Maud" by Tennyson, and so, he says, "before writing my essay, I would read the poem."

"I shall never forget the afternoon in my father's house when I read *Maud* for the first time. I entered the room one kind of man and left it another kind of man. When one passes through a profound spiritual experience, although one is apparently unaware of one's surroundings at the time, they are indelibly impressed on the memory. I thought nothing of it then, but I remember now the weather of that cold November afternoon, the location of the desk in the room and the angle at which I sat in my chair at that desk. I had always been fond of narrative verse, I had read all of Shakespeare, but I do not think I had any real appreciation or understanding of pure poetry until the day I first read *Maud.*"

Incidentally the sentence in this paragraph—"I entered

the room one kind of man and left it another kind of man"—is almost exactly what was said concerning all students who sat under Professor Phelps, for the editor of the Saturday Review of Literature in the year of Phelps' retirement from Yale, 1933, wrote something that every teacher who has any love for his profession wishes at some time could be said about him. "No student entered those lectures and came out by the same door wherein he went." (*Saturday Review of Literature,* April 29, 1933, page 558)

It will interest those who love the Moody Bible Institute to be told that early in his *Autobiography* Phelps devotes an entire, but brief chapter to the Moody and Sankey meetings held at Hartford, Connecticut, when Phelps was fifteen years of age. This is his own tribute to Moody.

"Moody was the greatest professional evangelist I ever heard. He had no mannerisms, very few gestures, and seldom raised his voice to a shout; but his deep and unaffected piety, his apposite figures of speech, his humour, his solid common sense, his thrilling earnestness, made him amazingly effective. He did great good and as he hated hysteria and sensationalism, he never did any harm. He was a man of genius. In later years I got to know him intimately, both at his school at Northfield and during his visits to Yale; it was impossible to talk with him without feeling his sincerity and his knowledge of human nature. . . . When I was an undergraduate he preached one Sunday at Yale. Attendance was compulsory and the attention to the average sermon was not very keen; and most sermons were no longer than twenty minutes. Mr. Moody preached for one hour, and held the breathless attention of the students.

"One of the best effects of his prolonged visit to Hartford in 1878 was on the various pastors of the city; they were roused to new zeal and the increase of membership was evident in every church."

Phelps received his B.A. from Yale in 1887, and in 1891 had the unique experience of receiving two higher degrees from the two most famous universities in Chicago, an M.A. from Harvard, and a Ph.D. from Yale. The next year he began teaching at Yale, and, as we have said before, continued to be its most distinguished Professor of English literature down to 1933. While at Yale he gave the first course in any American university on contemporary fiction and drama, and pioneered in introducing the Russian novelists to English readers. Up to 1941 I find that Professor Phelps received fifteen honorary degrees; five times he was given the degree of Doctor of Literature, once from Columbia in 1933; twice the degree of Litterarum Humaniorum Doctor; six times the degree of Doctor of Laws, once from Yale; once a Doctor of Divinity, and once the degree of Doctor of Systematic Theology.

Up to 1940 Dr. Phelps had written twenty-five books besides an innumerable number of magazine articles, and had given one-thousand lectures on literature throughout our country in addition to preaching for nearly twenty years, thirteen Sundays every summer at Huron City, Michigan, a fact we shall come back to later.

For some time Dr. Phelps conducted in Scribner's magazine the section known as "As I Like It," which was without doubt the most widely read and most informative and fascinating literary section of any periodical in America during the Twentieth Century. Scribners dropped Phelps' pages (so they told me in a letter sometime ago) because they said they wanted to become more modern. Well, two years after Phelps was released from this work, Scribner's magazine died.

The question might be asked, How could any man do as much work as this? Frankly, he did it because he worked. He says in his *Autobiography,* "Most of my writing has been done in the Long Vacation in my summer home in Michigan,

where we enjoy isolation and the absence of a telephone. We rise at six every morning (remember, this is a vacation he is talking about), which gives me five good hours at my desk before letter-writing."

In the final chapter of this same volume he says, "Work is man's greatest blessing. It has always been necessary for me to work, but if at any time during the last twenty years some eccentric person had left me a million dollars, I should have gone right on working at my chosen profession—teaching, writing, and public speaking. I enjoy all three. I enjoy them so much that I have no hesitation in saying that I enjoy them more than vacations."

This paragraph about his love for teaching compels me to bring to your attention three or four powerful passages in our Professor's *Autobiography* on the art and joy of teaching. He says that a year before he began his work at Yale, "I made up my mind that I would never allow myself to become a routine teacher, that I would try to make every recitation an event in the lives of the students, and anyhow an event in my own life. Despite innumerable errors and shortcomings, I can honestly say that although I have lectured badly, I have never done it mechanically; and in my last year of teaching at the age of 68, I found it as thrilling and delightful as during the earliest days."

"I had rather earn my living by teaching than in any other way. In my mind, teaching is not merely a life work, a profession, an occupation, a struggle; it is a passion. I love to teach. I love to teach as a painter loves to paint, as a musician loves to play, as a singer loves to sing, as a strong man rejoices to run a race. Teaching is an art—an art so great and so difficult to master that a man or a woman can spend an entire life at it without realizing much more than his limitations and mistakes, and his distance from the ideal."

"So far from being a dull routine, teaching is to me the

most adventurous, the most exciting, the most thrilling of professions. It has its perils, its discouragements, its successes, its delights. Browning says, 'It's an awkward thing to play with souls'; and whenever I enter a classroom filled with young men, I think of them not as a class or as a group, but as a collection of individual personalities more complex, more delicate, more intricate than any machinery. Not only is every student an organism more sensitive than any mechanical product; every student is infinitely precious to some parent or to some relative who may be three thousand miles away. That is why the teacher should never use irony or sarcasm or the language that humiliates; that is why he should never take the attitude of suspicion or depreciation. The officials at the United States Mint, the Head of a diamond mine, the President of a metropolitan bank are not dealing with material so valuable as that in the hands of the teacher. Their mistakes are not so disastrous as his; their success is not so important. The excitement of teaching comes from the fact that one is teaching a subject one loves to individuals who are worth more than all the money in the world."

"The highest ambition of every good teacher is to be excelled by his pupils. The one thing he wants more than anything else is that those whom he teaches will surpass him in every respect—in brains, character, achievement. As every normal father is prouder of his son's success than of his own, is made happier by his son's accomplishments than by his own independent work, so every normal teacher looks with happiness and pride on the success of those who were once his students."

Two anecdotes of his teaching career I cannot let go by, and with these we will turn to the Professor's brilliant pages concerning the Word of God. He says that once the famous Dean Briggs of Harvard came in to visit Yale's other gifted Professor in the Department of English Literature, Barrett

Wendell, while Phelps happened to be in Wendell's room. The following conversation took place:

B. "How are you getting on with your book, Wendell?"

W. "I shall finish it next Sunday."

B. "Why, do you work on Sunday?"

W. "Of course; it's the best day to work; the only day free of interruption."

B. "Well, merely putting it on the lowest possible ground, that of health, I should think you would find it well to have one day of rest."

W. "My dear fellow, that's the highest possible ground."

Speaking of Dean Briggs, and if you do not know something about this man you will hardly be able to appreciate this statement perhaps, but still I repeat it, Professor Phelps paid him one of the greatest compliments I have ever known one Professor to pay another. He says "One of the best things in my life was my intimate friendship with Briggs. Just as I always felt ignorant when talking with Professor Kittredge, so I always felt morally unworthy while talking with Dean Briggs; yet both men somehow or other made it easy for me."

Now, please do not think that I approve of everything that Phelps did, and I certainly do not agree with many of his opinions. Phelps was a great theater-goer, and enjoyed plays passionately. For my own part, the one criticism I would make of his *Autobiography* is that it had too much to say about the stage. Furthermore, some rough language sometimes creeps into Phelps' pages, especially when he is recording an anecdote in which a profane word was used. He repeats the word without hesitation. There are other things that I could mention. Still we want to be careful about condemning other people for things we do not approve of if we ourselves are guilty of doing worse things. I do not see anything in the Bible about theater-going pro or con, though I never go myself, but I see a lot in the Bible about telling lies, never pro

and always against, with the wrath of God upon it, and I do not think a Christian is consistent if he pretends to be horrified by someone going to a theater if he at the same time is not even conscience-stricken if he tells a plain lie either by word of lip or by conduct in business, in the home, or in social life.

We turn to our gifted Professor's writings and remarks about the Word of God. Aside from his articles, a list of which I have never seen, nor have I had time to make, Professor Phelps, in three books, wrote over 800 pages on the Bible alone in its various phases, and regarding many of its great characters, more than he wrote about any other volume in literature—even of Browning, which was his great passion—and more, I think, than any other famous teacher of English literature in America in the last half century, if I am not mistaken. One reason why Phelps came to love the Bible as he did, and to know so much about it, was that he was brought up to read it from childhood. In fact, he says that when he was five years old his mother offered him a dollar if he would read the Bible through from the first chapter of Genesis to the last of Revelation. "I confess," he says, "that my price has risen since then; but in my boyhood I had more leisure and less cash than I have now. . . . At first I thought more of the dollar than of the Holy Writ; but as I became interested, I found keener joy in the rest than in the price."

Toward the close of his life he said that the Bible was from the start an integral part of himself, adding that "it would be as absurd to attempt an estimate of what I owe to it as it would be to appraise what I owe to my lungs or to my heart."

It is in the opening page of his Introduction to his book, *Human Nature in the Bible,* which he published when he was 57 years old, that there occurs the most remarkable single

paragraph on the necessity of knowing the Word of God that has probably been expressed by any distinguished college professor in American literature, at least in our generation. We must remember that the man who wrote these words wrote them after he had been teaching for thirty years, and that this man is one who could say that he lived with Browning every day of his life, who, whether he said it or not, was one who lived the better part of every day among the greatest books of the world. This is Phelps' famous paragraph, and we feel that it is a proper way in which to introduce the things we would like to quote from his writings regarding the Holy Scripture.

"Everyone who has a thorough knowledge of the Bible may truly be called educated; and no other learning or culture, no matter how extensive or elegant, can, among Europeans and Americans, form a proper substitute. Western civilisation is founded upon the Bible; our ideas, our wisdom, our philosophy, our literature, our art, our ideals, come more from the Bible than from all other books put together. It is a revelation of divinity and of humanity; it contains the loftiest religious aspiration along with a candid representation of all that is earthly, sensual and devilish. I thoroughly believe in a university education for both men and women; but I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible.

Earlier he had said, "The Bible has been a greater influence on the course of English literature than on all other forces put together; it is impossible to read standard authors intelligently without knowing something about the Bible for they all assume familiarity with it on the part of their readers."

I would like to repeat, if I may, the first clause of this sentence. It would be well if this were hung as a motto in every English literature classroom in America. "The Bible

has been a greater influence on the course of English literature than all other forces put together."

Professor Phelps had a particular fondness for the King James Version which, he says, neither the Revised Version or any other version has ever surpassed or that will surpass. "The so-called Authorized or King James Version of the Bible, published in 1611, is the most influential book in English literature."

Because the Bible has been such an influence in the literature which we know and love, and of which we are so proud, Phelps believed that it was a great mistake not to have it read in our public schools. His paragraph is especially incisive on this point.

"The Bible is not only the foundation of modern English literature, it is the foundation of Anglo-Saxon civilization. It seems a narrow and mistaken policy to drive it out of the public schools. When I was a boy every day in school began with a chapter in the Bible and the Lord's Prayer; surely there was nothing sectarian about that. The Hebrew and Christian religions compare favorably with the Greek and Roman, with which we were compelled to familiarize ourselves at school, and, so far as I know, without protest from any source. If the Greek and Roman gods and goddesses were alive today, every one of them would be in jail."

We now come to some of Phelps' remarks about interpretations of portions of the Word of God. I think his paragraph beginning his book, *Human Nature in the Bible,* on the opening chapter of Genesis is one of the best things that has been written on this wonderfully rich and ancient account of Creation in our language.

"The early chapters of Genesis are a kind of Outline of History, like that by H. G. Wells, only better written. They are even more condensed than his, and like his book, they

attempt to account for the things we see: light, the sun, moon, stars, land, water, animals, and man. No one knows how any of these came into existence, but the Bible account is sublime in its simple dignity, and begins in a reasonable and orderly manner by putting the First Cause first. I have read accounts of the origin of the world in the bibles of other religions, and they all, while containing some fine and interesting remarks, seem to have much that is trivial and silly. There is nothing childish or silly in our Bible. The narrative opens like a great symphony:

> In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

"Lotze said that the Mosaic cosmogony was more sublime than any other, and he was right. It represents physical changes coming from the Divine Will, coming easily and immediately. The control of mind over matter seems to me more natural and reasonable than the other way round, in spite of the fact that some reasonable men are materialists. In the last analysis the idea that the human mind developed out of matter seems to me as curious as the idea that an automobile should make a man, rather than a man make an automobile. I wonder if those who believe that thought, imagination, poetry and music were made by matter do not fall into a vicious circle by somehow thinking that the creative matter had mind in it. . . .

"As a representation of continuous masterpieces in art, such as an artist throws off in his happiest moods, the first chapter in the Bible has a magnificence all its own; from the point of view of science it marks the procession from the inorganic to the organic; the waters were divided, the lower

waters receded, and the dry land appeared; then came vegetation, luxurious abundant—the third day. Fish and fowl appeared on the fifth day; on the sixth came the beasts of the earth, running and creeping flat, followed by the upright figure of man."

It can never be denied that Phelps knew life, and for this reason he is able to bring out of certain passages in literary masterpieces great, vivid, quickening interpretations as in his remarks about such a strange theme as Samson and Delilah when he says:

"I remember, as a boy, Samson giving Delilah his secret seemed to me inexplicable; how could he be such a fool? He not only knew the necessity of keeping his strength, but her absolute treachery had been proved in his presence three times. My father had found it impossible to explain the situation to me, though I noticed it seemed natural enough to him. One must have lived some time in the world in order to understand how natural it is. It happens every day. Samson was not the only fool in the world. It was not until he became blinded that he really saw the truth. Good health often blunts one's perceptions."

His brief, concluding comment on Elijah is something that many of us need to remember just now: "It was his destiny to be a steadfast servant of God among many apostates, and to speak the truth when it was most unwelcomed. He is a dark and tragic figure, outlined against a gay and pleasure-loving court; his loneliness is most appealing, and, indeed, those who devote themselves in all sincerity to the divine will must have souls capable of withstanding the terrors of solitude. They must make their own world for they do not share the common aims of society. Yet their darkness is lightened by the lamp of the Holy Spirit."

Let me tarry once again in the many rich things Dr. Phelps has written concerning passages in the Old Testament, and

this in regard to a very difficult subject—what we call, the Imprecatory Psalms. These are his words:

"In recent times, up to the year of grace 1914, many godly people were troubled by the so-called imprecatory psalms, where the poets called on God to torture, crush, and annihilate their enemies; these psalms were written by fighters, who hated their enemies and believed that their personal enemies were the enemies of righteousness. They therefore called loudly for divine vengeance, and rejoiced in their foes' discomfiture and ruin. I say that these poems were prudently omitted from pulpit reading, as it was felt that in modern and more peaceful days we had outgrown such rancorous hostility, or at all events that we ought to have done so. But when I remember the language used in the pulpits of some American churches during the World War, I find it very easy to understand the mood of the cursing psalms, and I find it impossible to take toward those hymns of hate a superior attitude; for surely the twentieth century, as often represented by official religion, was in precisely the same frame of mind. Human nature at any critical moment may burst through the confining garments of culture, education, and religion, as an angry man throws off restraint.

"This is the vigorous fashion in which the Psalmist preached in time of war; of course he believed that his own advancement and that of the Kingdom of God were firmly united; it was a holy war:

> They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause. . . .
>
> Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.
>
> Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.
>
> Let the Extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the Lord; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

"On the night of 22 January, 1922, a clergyman in Leeds, England, made a sensation by announcing that this Psalm, CIX, would henceforth be expurgated from the service; he added that he would like also to remove Psalms XXXV and LXIX, on the ground that all three were unchristian. They are certainly unchristian, but they are not unnatural. The clergyman said, 'No one has been able to explain the curses in the Psalms and they represent human nature at its very worst.' Well, they represented human nature very well not only in David's time, but in 1914–19, and expressed a common feeling."

At the beginning of his later work, *Human Nature and the Gospel,* Dr. Phelps pays this glorious tribute to the New Testament which so many people use only as a battleground for critical theories, or a field in which to cultivate some strange and peculiar theories about the Lord Jesus or the Apostle Paul, but which Phelps saw in its true glory and magnificence.

"In the presence of the light of the world all other lights are dim, and it is impossible to consider the New Testament merely as a literary work. It is assuredly the literary masterpiece of all time as superior to Shakespeare, Homer, Gothe, Dante, Tolstoi as they are superior to the common place; but it is essentially a spiritual book and cannot be understood at all unless there is some spiritual capacity in the reader's heart and mind."

I would like to have been in the class at Yale, when Dr.

Phelps expressed these words, as he often did at different times. He calls the fourth gospel "not only the spiritual masterpiece of the world's literature" but, "it is" says he, "closer to the core of truth than any other part of the Bible. If I were allowed to retain only one book, it would be this."

And then he has a very subtle thing to say, and true, regarding the critics that arise to deny the Johannine authorship of this precious piece of literature.

"When I remember how scholars used to say that the Gospel of John was written by somebody toward the close of the second century, and when today there are first-rate scholars who believe it was written before the year 75 *and in Palestine,* and by someone who knew personally him whom it describes, I feel like cheering! It confirms me in what I have always maintained: never to give up a spiritual truth because of any alleged discovery of science. Wait, anyhow, until the scientific statement has been verified. Else one may lose one's divine birthright and get not even a mess of pottage."

Professor Phelps says that the thirteenth and fifteenth chapters of I Corinthians "are pages of such lofty grandeur, that they tower above everything else in the world's literature except the actual words of Jesus in the Gospels. The eminence of Jesus in literary art is unique as is His eminence in Morality."

And with one more sentence—the final one—in his earlier book, *Reading the Bible,* we would bring to a close this particular consideration of Phelps' faith.

"As the Bible, day by day, exerts its regenerating and vivifying spiritual influence on the souls of men, so its sublime and homely poetry and prose recreate in the masterpieces in all literature which rise from the inexhaustible spring of living water in the Word of Life."

Let me now, for a few moments, gladly, enthusiastically, bring to your attention some remarkable expressions of Pro-

fessor Phelps regarding his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It seems as if he could not find words with which to express his own conviction in the absolute supremacy and pre-eminence of the Son of God. In fact, at the very beginning of his book, *Human Nature and the Gospel,* on the page preceding his preface, he prints just one single statement of two sentences, the famous remark by William Hazlitt, in his essay *Of Persons One Would Wish To Have Seen.*

> "There is only one other person I can ever think of after this," continued Hunt, but without mentioning a name that once put on a semblance of mortality. "If Shakespeare was to come into the room, we should all rise up to meet him; but if that person was to come into it, we should all fall down and try to kiss the hem of his garment!"

In the middle of the same volume he undertakes to write a paragraph to express his own deep conviction concerning the Son of God, and these are his words:

"We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that Christianity is a personal religion. The gateway to Christianity is not through an intricate labyrinth of dogma, but by a simple belief in the person of Christ. Leave dogma to those who enjoy it; the true Christian is simply a member of Christ's society, of his party, one of his followers. I cannot understand the nature of the Infinite Energy; but I can follow Jesus Christ, because he took the form of a young man, and we have the story of his life, actions, and words. I think he was wiser and better than Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, or Theodore Roosevelt; I find it easier to be a Christian partisan than to be a Republican or Democrat. I have more faith in the practical wisdom and knowledge of Jesus than I have in that of Julius Caesar or of any statesman, soldier or philosopher. He had more common sense than any person I ever saw, heard, or read of: he was the most independent and the most coura-

geous individual of whom we have any record. In his service there is freedom."

The Professor does not speak of his religious convictions with great fulness in his *Autobiography,* but when he does refer to them, there is no doubt as to what he believes. For instance, in referring to Professor Santayana, the distinguished philosopher of Harvard, who was emphatically an atheist, he says he felt compelled to bear his own testimony to the Lord Jesus in these words:

"I really believe in the Incarnation—that the Son of God is not only the Saviour of the world, but that He will eventually save it."

We will come back to his faith and the incarnation later. Let us begin at the beginning of our Lord's life—with the Virgin Birth—and here so many modern men think they are compelled to render a verdict of repudiation, and think that to maintain a reputation for scholarship they must deny this miracle of the incarnate life of our Lord. But not Professor Phelps. What a ringing testimony he gives to his faith in this divine conception of Christ when he says:

"The whole question of the Virgin Birth of Jesus need not afflict the average man. If Jesus is unique, unlike any other person, it is not illogical to believe that his birth was unique; but if Jesus was simply a good man, then the Christian religion—as a religion—loses its foundation. In the presence of the Supreme Miracle of the Incarnation, other miracles are of minor importance."

Pressing upon his readers the fact of the Incarnation, he closes this same chapter on "The First Christmas" with these words:

"It is therefore absurd for those who deny the divinity of Christ, to call him a perfect man. Either his assumption of authority came from his union with God, or he was the most conceited of human beings. Modesty is one of the finest manly

attributes; a man cannot be perfect, cannot even be called very good, who lacks modesty, who takes himself too seriously. If Jesus were only a man, he lacked one of the cardinal virtues and was marked by a fault peculiarly offensive. But the angels and the shepherds and the wise men who celebrated the first Christmas, they knew who he was. Kneeling before the manger at Bethlehem they worshipped the Divine Saviour."

I have an idea that Professor Phelps at some time must have preached, and perhaps often, on Luke 4:18, 19—the words which Jesus read concerning Himself from the prophecy of Isaiah as He stood up that day in the synagogue at Nazareth, because in the early part of his volume, *Human Nature and the Gospel,* he has one of the most remarkable, compact, clear and penetrating paragraphs on these precious words that I have seen, including biblical commentaries. Here we have an insight into what Professor Phelps thought about the awfulness of sin and the need of a Redeemer.

"*He was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor.* No matter how rich in money and lands and property one may be, one without faith is poor indeed. And those who have received in their hearts the Good News brought by Jesus, they are passing rich; they have the wealth of love. *He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted.* One does not have to experience unusual calamities to have one's heart broken; every man and woman suffers more than once from heartbreak. It is impossible to escape that experience. Well, Jesus came to heal these broken hearts and restore them with hope and joy. *To preach deliverance to the captives*—we are all in bondage. We are slaves to our sins or to our fears, to our habits or to our anxieties; sometimes to our pleasures. Christ came to remove these shackles and set us free. *Recovering of sight to the blind*—we cannot see. The truth is there and it is hidden from us. Jesus came to open our eyes, that we might behold the most beautiful thing in the world. I suppose that

after death, when we have unblemished and unclouded vision, and we then remember the days on earth, we shall wonder most of all how we could have been so blind. There were signs everywhere that ought to have been convincing. Only the pure in heart shall see God; the reason we cannot see Him now is because none of us is pure in heart. Jesus came to clarify our sight. A peasant with the love of God is more clear-eyed than the shrewdest statesman or cleverest man of affairs without it. *To set at liberty them that are bruised*—no accident is necessary to bruise us. Mere daily living is sufficient. As walking on a rocky road bruises the feet, so the pilgrimage of life, even in the most fortunate circumstances, leaves us scarred. Every man and woman has soul-bruises, is weatherworn. Jesus came to give us liberty, so that we shall stand up and walk as free men should walk. *To preach the acceptable year of the Lord*—to tell us that this should be the happiest moment in our lives.

"Observe that in this programme there is no warning, there is no threat; there is no toil or tax demanded. All that is asked is faith, the willingness to receive; the honest acceptance of something more free than the wind. The Physician is himself the remedy. Jesus never added a hair's height to the burden of care and woe. He is the only Conqueror who came, not to oppress, but to relieve."

Speaking of sin, Professor Phelps seemed compelled again and again to emphasize the awfulness and the hideousness and the power of this dreadful thing.

"Evil has an enormous natural advantage over good. Sin invariably appeals to our strongest instincts, to our desires and our passions; so far from appealing to reason, it temporarily puts reason under an eclipse. In every human heart, no matter how well disciplined and fortified, sin has a formidable ally. Sin always creates an illusion, in which the tempted man sees only the pleasure of the contemplated act, while its conse-

quences, which are in reality inseparably joined to it, are lost in the midst of desire. Nothing is so complete or so clever a cheat as Nature. She befuddles us with the illusive charm of a certain path of action, and we wake up in the mire. The love of money and the lust of the flesh are often as fatal to reason as an excess of alcohol; for there are many ways of becoming intoxicated.

"The bank clerk, trying to support his wife and children on a moderate salary, and handling large sums of money daily, sees what he believes to be a sure opportunity of adding instantly to his resources; it apparently has every advantage except the negligible one of honesty. In two weeks he can replace the sum taken, and keep the splendid margin. If when this expedient seemed so desirable and so secure, he could also have foreseen the prison sentence, the loss of liberty and the destruction of his peace of mind, he would have resisted; but Nature deceived him, and he saw only two weeks ahead, instead of two years, which were nevertheless equally certain.

"No wonder that all people are sinners, differing only in degree. The wonder is that men and women are as decent as so many of them are. Franklin said that if people were as bad as they are with religion, what would they be without it? We need it because of our fundamental inclination toward folly. . . .

"There are zealous reformers who believe that the world can be changed here and now into Paradise. IF—but listen to one of the most earnest of them, H. G. Wells, who in 1918 wrote, 'I am a man who looks now towards the end of life, fifty-one years have I scratched off from my calendar, another slips by, and I cannot tell how many more of the sparse remainder of possible years are really mine. I live in days of hardship and privation, when it seems more natural to feel ill than well; without holidays or rest or peace; friends and the

sons of my friends have been killed; the newspapers that come in to my house tell mostly of blood and disaster, of drownings and slaughterings or of cruelties and base intrigues. Yet never have I been so sure that there is a divinity in man and that a great order of human life, a reign of justice and world-wide happiness, of plenty, power, hope, and gigantic creative effort, lies close at hand. Even now we have the science and the ability available for a universal welfare, though it is scattered about the world like a handful of money, dropped by a child, even now there exists all the knowledge that is needed to make mankind universally free and human life sweet and noble. We need but the courage to lay our hands upon it and in a little space of years it can be ours."

Being a Professor of Literature, himself accustomed to critically judge literary works and to discover their merit and virtue and power, Professor Phelps' verdict concerning the uniqueness of the teachings of Jesus is something we ought to remember. "He was a supreme literary artist. The short stories that he produced with such colloquial ease are the finest in the world; they are indeed the despair of all professional men of letters. No tales ever written combine such amazing power with such impressive economy in the use of words. The Parables are the perfection of realistic art."

Elsewhere he says, "The recorded sayings of Jesus can be read in three hours, but it will take three-thousand years to realize their import."

Knowing his confidence and belief in the Virgin Birth, we are not surprised to find Professor Phelps expressing a similar confidence in the recorded miracles of our Lord. "It is idle to attempt to cancel or to explain away the miracles of Jesus. If we could satisfactorily dispose of some of them, others would remain. Once more, let it be repeated that if Jesus was a divine, unique personality, it is not unreasonable to believe that he would have used powers beyond human capacity

or understanding; if he was not unique, then our religion is baseless."

We now come to the greatest of all miracles. What did this Professor, teaching at Yale for forty years, think of the Resurrection of Christ? And I believe, after all is said and done, that it is by one's conception of the Resurrection that one is able to determine whether a man truly accepts the Christ of the New Testament or not. Oh, if we only had a thousand men in our universities speaking with the definite accent of deep conviction that Professor Phelps often expressed when he came to his subject.

"In the whole story of Jesus Christ, the most important event is the Resurrection. Christian faith depends on this. It is encouraging to know that it is explicitly given by all four evangelists, and told also by Paul. The names of those who saw him after his triumph over death are recorded; and it may be said that the historical evidence for the Resurrection is stronger than for any other miracle anywhere narrated. . . . Our faith in God, in Christ, in Life itself, is based on the Resurrection; for as Paul said, if Christ be not risen from the dead, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain."

"What was the cause of this revolution of the spirit? Why were the few members of the earliest Christian organizations so toweringly certain of their faith? The answer can only be their own knowledge of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ."

I do not know anyone who has more vividly shown the preeminence of Christ over all other men than Professor Phelps toward the close of his volume, *Human Nature and the Gospel,* in which he contrasts the Apostle Paul and the Lord Jesus.

"Paul is the greatest human figure in the history of Christianity. And how interesting it is to compare him with his Master! Although Paul was an evangelist who combined wisdom, learning, diplomacy, foresight, together with inspira-

tion, he was wholly and completely human. No one except idolaters and ignorant barbarians ever believed he was divine; his character, mind, and temperament were exclusively human. So were his faults, of which he had an abundance. But when, in imagination, we place beside Paul, with all his genius, the figure of our Lord Jesus Christ, the difference is as striking as it would be if the Master were in some form quite other than human. Paul was a man, just that, just unmistakably that and nothing more. But of all beings of whom we have any record in the history of this world, Jesus is the only one who seems divine. And as Shakespeare always seems greater when we place alongside the greatest of his contemporaries, so when we place Paul near his Master, we seem to be the witnesses of an immediate Transfiguration."

And now let me, in closing this discussion of Professor Phelps' faith in Jesus Christ, read to you his magnificent confession written in 1931 in an article in the *Christian Herald* to which I have already referred.

"At the same time, if I believed that the Christian religion was contrary to reason, I should abandon religion at once. Belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ seems to me more reasonable than belief in the Republican party or the Democratic party or any political party. Yet I vote.

"Suppose an intelligent, candid, fair-minded under-graduate comes to me and asks me how it is possible for me to have and enjoy in these 'scientific' and agnostic times, a vital Christian faith. What shall I tell him? Well, you may be sure I never, under any circumstances, either in public or in private, tell young people what I think 'is good for them' unless I believe it to be true. What is good for them is what is good for me—the truth.

"I will tell him that one of the things a man should learn in college is how to distinguish the best from the second best. Shakespeare is better than Shelley. Beethoven is better than

Brahms. Raphael is better than Murillo. Looking over every character in history who has any right to be considered a spiritual leader; is there any one who holds the first place? Is it Confucius? No. Is it Buddha? Is it Mohammed? Is it Socrates? Is it St. Paul? No. Is it Jesus? Yes. Both in His teaching and in His life, He comes first. And in religion, as in everything else, I want the first and the best. Comparing Him with every other individual we know, is there any one else who seems divine? Not to me. Abraham Lincoln was a good man, and one hundred per cent human. Place before the eye of the imagination Jesus and Paul, and the difference is immediately obvious. To me Jesus is unique."

16

FIVE FAMOUS POETIC INTERPRETATIONS OF OUR LORD'S NATIVITY

Christian hymns, in fact true hymnology, were born when our Lord was born. Singing throughout the Scriptures is the consequence of a sense of being divinely redeemed, and when the Redeemer Himself was born the angels of glory and the saints on earth seemed equally inspired to sing the praises of the newborn Savior. This is why, in the Gospel of Luke, where the nativity of our Lord is given in greatest detail, we have the Magnificat of Mary; the Benedictus of Zacharias; the *Nunc Dimittis* of Simeon; and the *Gloria in Excelsis* of the angels. While the church possesses beautiful hymns unfolding every major aspect of our Lord's life and glory, it is around His birth that more great hymns have been written than around any other one episode of His holy life on earth.

As Canon Bernard has remarked in his very precious volume, *The Songs of the Holy Nativity,* "here in the prelude of Luke, marked off as having a more private character, are lyric utterances and songs in earth and heaven, melodious voices which do not mingle with events that follow. The entire Gospel story has, with all its deep seriousness, a poetic side. Thank God it is so; since thus it is better fitted to win its way to the common heart of man. But it is obvious that the poetic element belongs to the first section of St. Luke's gospel in an exceptional degree. . . . This poetic side of religion belongs to the poetic side of our nature, a part of the constitution which God has given us, a part on which His Spirit operates in the sanctification of the whole man. For its spiritual education and its helpful action to this end He has

made provision in His Word and very notably in the gospel of the Nativity."

I would like to refer to five of the great poetic interpretations of this great event from which all history dates and as the result of which God the Son forever became also the Son of Man.

The first one I would refer to may not be known to some of my listeners. It was not known to me, I am sorry to say, until about a year ago. Of course, we all know that great medieval hymn known as the "Stabat Mater Dolorosa," which begins, in Latin,

"Stabat mater dolorosa
Juxta crucem lacrymosa,
Dum pendebat Filius.
Cuius animam gementem,
Contristatam et dolentem,
Pertransivit gladius."

and which has been translated:

"Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
By the cross her vigil keeping,
While her Jesus hung thereon:
Through her heart, in sorrow moaning,
With Him grieving, for Him groaning,
Through that heart the sword hath gone."

This hymn has been called, "The most poetic hymn of the middle ages." It was written, we believe, by a Franciscan monk of the thirteenth century, Jacopone dei Todi. I was astonished to discover not long ago that there is another hymn very similar to this one, possibly written by the same medieval poet, known as "Stabat Mater Speciosa." The first one refers to our Lord's death, but the latter refers to our Lord's birth. It was first published in 1495, together with the author's far more famous and wonderful "Stabat Mater Dolorosa," and then was lost sight of for nearly five centuries, when it was

rediscovered in the great national library at Paris, by Ozanam, and printed by him in 1852. It has often been translated. Perhaps I have time to read just a few stanzas of this exquisite medieval presentation of the holy nativity.

STABAT MATER SPECIOSA

Stood the fairest Mother, keeping
Watch and ward o'er Jesus sleeping
  On His couch of pillowing straw;
Yet with what delight unbounded
Was her glowing heart surrounded
  As her dearest Babe she saw!

Joy she felt, as might no other
Save alone the spotless Mother
  Of the Sole-begotten One:
How her swelling breast was telling
The indwelling joys upwelling
  As she bent above her Son!

Who can read the wondrous story,
Nor feel something of the glory
  Christ's dear Mother felt of old?
Who can picture her caressing
Such a child, nor feel a blessing
  Like to hers, His heart enfold?

For His people's sins, a manger
Held the Savior as a stranger,
  Chilled with worse than wintry air;
Yet the angels bowed before Him,
Magi hastened to adore Him;
  Stable 'twas—yet Heaven was there.

Christ was born within a stable:
Sing, ye heavenly hosts, unable
  To contain your vast amaze:
Yet a deeper joy unspoken
Held the twain in peace unbroken—
  Mary, Joseph, silent gaze.

Mother, fount of love o'erflowing,
Let me share with thee the glowing
  Ardors of the cherubim;
That my inmost heart, revealing
Nought but love at Love's unsealing,
  May be pleasing unto Him.

Holy Mother, let me borrow
Something of thy tender sorrow,
  Graven deeply on my heart:
Of the shame the manger offered,
Of the woes the Savior suffered,
  Let me share with thee a part.

Grant a measure of thy pleasure;
Let me hold thy Baby Treasure
  Throughout life with love and awe:
Count me no intruding stranger
If with thee, beside His manger,
  I bend o'er the scattering straw.

While an exile here I wander,
May my longing soul grow fonder
  Of my Infant God and thee;
Closer be the constant union,
Dearer still the sweet communion
  With the Holy Family.

Virgin, purer than all others,
Mother, tenderest of mothers,
  To mine arms thy Infant give:
Let me bear the precious Burden,
Whose dear birth prepared our guerdon;
  For He died that we might live.

Let me taste the raptured sweetness
Of the Babe's divine completeness—
  Let me leap with joy divine:
Steep my senses beyond measure
In the ocean depths of pleasure,
  Since such fellowship is mine.

May the Word of God forearm me;
Through His love, no evil harm me,
  Saved and nourished by His grace:
When in death the veil is riven,
May my soul, caught up to Heaven,
  See Him ever face to face.

All who love the stable lowly,
With the shepherds joined, a holy
  Vigil keep of faith and love;
Mary, pray we may inherit
Through thy Son's atoning merit,
  Endless fatherland above.

The most famous poem ever written about the nativity of our Lord was composed by John Milton in 1629 when he was only 20 years of age. The distinguished French critic, Legoius, remarks that "nothing as marvelous had been written in the mood of this ode . . . the interpretation of sound and meaning is undefinable and mysterious." Critics of every generation would agree with Henry Hallam in saying that Milton's "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" is perhaps the finest poem in all the English language. I have loved these stanzas since a boy. There are thirty-one stanzas, but we shall confine ourselves to eleven. The first four of the hymn proper describe the winter and the peace that prevailed over the earth at the time our Lord was born:

"It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
  Nature, in awe to him,
  Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathise:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the Sun, her lusty paramour.

"Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air

To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

"But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace:
She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

"No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around;
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;
The hooked chariot stood,
Unstained with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by."

I have always thought that perhaps the stanzas depicting the end of paganism as the consequence of our Lord's birth were the best of all:

"The Oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

"Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,

With that twice-battered God of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine:
The Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn;
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

"And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

"Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud;
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest Hell can be his shroud;
In vain, with timbrelled anthems dark,
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipped ark.

"He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand;
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine;
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew.

"So, when the sun in bed,
Curtained with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave,

And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze.

"But see! the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest.
Time is our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest-teemed star
Hath fixed her polished car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending;
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harnessed Angels sit in order serviceable."

Two hundred years later and more, Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote her exquisite poem, "The Virgin Mary to the Child Jesus," beginning with the delicate line, "Sleep, sleep, mine holy one." Before quoting some of these lines, may I diverge for a moment from the strict theme about which we are speaking and call your attention to two remarkable declarations of faith made by this greatest woman poet of the nineteenth century, which I only came upon a short while ago in reading more or less extensively in the life of Elizabeth Browning—a life, by the way, which I think has never been fully written. In 1843, in a letter to an author, William Merry, who had sent her a booklet of his, she wrote: "There is only one work which brings salvation, and that is Christ's upon the Cross. And He saves us *that we may work, and not because we work.*" Eleven years later when Mrs. Browning was forty-eight years of age, she strongly affirmed her faith in Christ in boldly declaring: "Never at any point of my life, and now thank God, least of all, have I felt myself drawn toward Unitarian opinions. I should throw up revelation altogether if I ceased to recognize Christ as Divine."

Returning now to Mrs. Browning's poem which, by the way, she introduces with two lines from Milton's hymn: "But see, the virgin blessed hath laid her Babe to rest," we will give only the first, the eighth, and the twelfth stanzas:

"Sleep, sleep, mine Holy One!
My flesh, my Lord!—what name? I do not know
A name that seemeth not too high or low,
Too far from me or Heaven.
My Jesus, that is best! that word being given
By the majestic angel whose command
Was softly as a man's beseeching said,
When I and all the earth appeared to stand
In the great overflow
Of light celestial from his wings and head.
Sleep, sleep, my saving One!

"So, seeing my corruption, can I see
This Incorruptible now born of me,
This fair new Innocence no sun did chance
To shine on (for even Adam was no child),
Created from my nature all defiled,
This mystery from out mine ignorance,
Nor feel the blindness, stain, corruption, more
Than others do, or I did heretofore?
Can hands wherein such burden pure has been,
Not open with the cry 'unclean, unclean!'
More often than any else beneath the skies?
Ah King, ah Christ, ah son!
The kine, the shepherds, the abased wise,
Must all less lowly wait
Than I, upon thy state!
Sleep, sleep, my kingly One!

"It is enough to bear
This image still and fair,
This holier in sleep,
Than a saint at prayer:
This aspect of a child
Who never sinned or smiled;
This presence in an infant's face:
This sadness most like love,
This love than love more deep,
This weakness like omnipotence,
It is so strong to move!

Awful is this watching place,
Awful what I see from hence—
A king, without regalia,
A God, without the thunder,
A child, without the heart for play;
Ay, a Creator rent asunder
From his first glory and cast away
On his own world, for me alone
To hold in hands created, crying, SON!"

Christina Rossetti, in 1859, wrote a lovely Christmas carol of five stanzas which has a unique, personal, pointed, wholesome, concluding appeal:

"In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty winds made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

"Our God, heaven cannot hold Him,
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.

'Enough for him whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for him whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.

"Angels and archangels
May have gathered there.
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air;
But only His mother,
In her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the Beloved
With a Kiss.

"What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a wise man
I would do my part,—
Yet what can I give Him:
Give my heart."

It has been years since I read Longfellow's "Christmas Bells," which was written in 1864 at the time of the Civil War and of all the Christmas hymns has, I think, the most encouraging note for a warring world.

"I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

"And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

"Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

"Then from each black accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

"It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearthstones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

"And in despair I bowed my head;
'There is no peace on earth,' I said;
'For hate is strong
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!'

"Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead; nor doth He sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men!'"

17

TWO NOTABLE TESTIMONIES TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE HALLS OF CONGRESS ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Some time ago in reading Dr. Henry Otis Dwight's *Centennial Record of the American Bible Society* (1916) I came upon the following item which interested me so much that I copied it to file away and later further investigate. By sheer accident I came upon this notation I had made a few weeks ago, and most providentially, I believe, for inasmuch as it concerns something occurring one hundred years ago, I was incited to see what further information I could secure concerning the incident which this record describes. Dr. Dwight's brief paragraph consisted of these three sentences: "A General Bible Convention was held in Washington, the place of meeting being the Hall of the House of Representatives. In that crowded hall, Ex-President John Quincy Adams presided as senior Vice President of the American Bible Society. In an address full of fire, he set forth the value and power of the Holy Scripture and his own conviction to the Society to extend their circulation."

Now this is all that Dr. Dwight chose to say about this memorable occasion. My aroused interest in this subject led me to investigate as to what happened in this great Bible conference held in the Congressional Halls in the House of Representatives, and the result of this research I would like to bring to your attention.

Inasmuch as both of the matters which are to be described in this article refer to John Quincy Adams, it may be advan-

tageous if we just remind ourselves for a moment of the notable career of this famous American citizen.

The sixth President of the United States was the eldest son of John Adams, born in Braintree, now Quincy, Mass., July 11, 1767. When he was only eleven years old he was taken to France by his father, and we find him even then keeping a journal which later grew into one of the most important diaries of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Adams matriculated at Leyden University when he was only thirteen years old in January, 1781. Before he was twenty he went to St. Petersburg as secretary to Francis Dana, the United States Minister to Russia. In 1783 he returned to Holland and resumed his classical studies in Dumas, and then returning to his own country, graduated at twenty years of age from Harvard University with probably the greatest experience of travel and acquaintance with the dignitaries of Europe of any man of his age in all our land. He was sent as Minister to the Netherlands in 1794, when he was only twenty-seven years of age, and when he was thirty-six, he was elected to the United States Senate in February, 1803. Three years later he was appointed to the Chair of Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard. At the age of forty-two he was sent as Minister to St. Petersburg, and in February, 1811, was appointed as Justice to the Supreme Court of the United States, an honor which he declined. He became Minister to the Court of St. James, and then under Monroe, the Secretary of State in March, 1817. In 1825, then fifty-eight years old, Adams was elected the sixth President of the United States. Soon after his fourth year he was elected to the twenty-second Congress, March 4, 1831, and was re-elected continuously for eight Congresses, serving for seventeen years until his death, February 13, 1847, the first time an ex-President had ever been elected to the House of Representatives.

Adams was acknowledged everywhere as the most distin-

guished of all American citizens of his generation. He was a prodigious worker, and fearless and uncompromising in his convictions, a man of personal integrity, looked up to and admired even by his enemies; his earnest sincerity and wisdom were never questioned throughout all of his years of public activity. Some of the most dramatic movements that have ever occurred in the Congressional Halls of our Capitol were those in which Adams rose head and shoulders above all of his colleagues, and master of delicate problems, asserted the greatness of his individuality in fearlessly leading the House in actions which should be taken.

First of all, I find that in the Congressional Globe covering the sessions of the twenty-eighth Congress, the first item on the docket for Wednesday, February 21, 1844, in the House of Representatives reads as follows:

"On motion of Mr. Adams, the use of the hall was granted on Tuesday next to the American Bible Society." On that Tuesday, February 27, a very interesting advertisement appeared in the Washington Daily National Intelligencer reading as follows:

"Bible Meeting. The friends of the American Bible Society will hold a public meeting this evening, at the Capitol, where the Honorable John Quincy Adams, first Vice-President, will take the chair at 7:00 o'clock . . . Addresses delivered by the Rev. Dr. Tyng of Philadelphia, the Rev. Dr. Cox of New York, and others."

For some reason, the Washington newspapers did not publish the speech that Adams made on this occasion, but both the National Intelligencer of Friday, March 1, and the Daily Globe for the same day had about one-half of a column concerning the meeting from which I take the following:

"The large hall of the House of Representatives was crowded. The chair was taken by the Honorable John Quincy Adams, the oldest Vice-President—that is, of the

American Bible Society—supported by other vice-presidents, the Honorable John McClean, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and the Honorable Robert P. Dunlap, member of Congress from Maine, Dr. Sparrow of the Theological Seminary of Alexandria, and with prayer by Dr. Tinsley, Chaplain of the House of Representatives." We must all concede that that was a good crowd—Ex-President of the United States, Justice of the Supreme Court, Member of Congress, and Chaplain. What a wonderful group that would be on the platform of a Bible convention. On motion of the Rev. Mr. Berry of Georgetown, D.C., the following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved, That the Bible from its wisdom, purity, and impartiality, is a safe and needful guide to all men, and peculiarly important to those of our own country to which servant is the public will."

There were also present at this meeting the Rev. Dr. Tyng of Philadelphia, one of the most distinguished clergymen of his day, who made the following motion which was seconded by General Howard of Indiana:

"Resolved, That as the providence of God is sending to our shores men of different tongues and habits, it becomes us as our pious duty to seek their moral welfare, and particularly to furnish them with the Holy Scripture as the rule of their faith and conduct."

A communication was addressed to the Chair by the Rev. Mr. Tuston, Chaplain of the Senate, expressing his regret that an indispensable engagement called him from the city at that time, and enclosing the following resolution which was seconded by the members:

"Resolved, That the Bible is the great statute-book to which the statesman, desiring the perpetuity of his country's renown, with safety refer for precedent and principles."

The presiding officer of this great occasion, the former

President of the United States, John Quincy Adams, who had been elected thirty-five years before this as Vice-President of the American Bible Society, gave an address, and it is this address that is to engage our thought at this time. It would be impossible for me to bring this to your attention—I mean this address—if it were not for the great kindness of the librarian of the American Bible Society. When Mr. Adams finished his speech of the evening, a resolution was offered and unanimously adopted that this address be published and circulated, but as far as is known, it never was published except in the *Bible Society Record* of March, 1844, a very rare document, which, of course, could never be picked up today, and the only reason I can present it to you is that the librarian of the American Bible Society very kindly copied it for me. This message of the Honorable John Quincy Adams is not to be found in any biography of this distinguished statesman, nor in any volume dealing with the religious life of our country during the first half of the nineteenth century.

"Fellow-citizens and members of the Bible Society, in taking the chair as the oldest Vice-President of the Society, I deem myself fortunate in having the opportunity, at a stage of a long life, drawing rapidly to its close, to bear at this place, the Capitol of our national Union, in the Hall of Representation of the North American people, in the chair of the presiding officer of the assembly representing the whole people, the personification of the great and mighty nation, to bear my solemn testimonial of reverence and gratitude to that book of books, the Holy Bible.

"Thirty-five years have passed away since, in the State House of Boston, the capitol of my native commonwealth, I became a member of this society; and though I have followed with a deep interest their continued exertions, and the various fortunes of their success in distributing this book, I

think I have never been able to attend another meeting of the Society from that time to this. Since that time one generation of men has passed away, and another has arisen.

"In the midst of the painful and perilous conflicts inseparable from public life, and at the eve of that moment when the grave shall close over them forever, I may be permitted to indulge in the pleasing reflection that having been taught in childhood the unparalleled blessings of the Christian gospel, in the maturity of manhood I associated with my brethren of that age, for spreading the light of that gospel over the face of the earth, by the simple and silent process of placing in the hands of every human being who needed, and could not otherwise procure it, the book which contains the duties, admonitions, the promises and the rewards of the Christian Gospel. It is a soothing consolation to my last hours, that having so long been associated in this cause with the fathers, I still find myself associated in it with the sons; that it has in the interval been perseveringly and unceasingly prosecuted with intense ardour, with untiring assiduity, and with animating and eminent success. The race of man in his fallen state is placed by successive generations on the earth to improve his own condition and that of his kind, and that this book has been furnished him by the special providence of his Maker to enable him, by faith in his Redeemer, and by works conformable to that faith, to secure salvation in a future world, and to promise his well-being in the present.

"If this be true, the improvement of successive generations of men, in their condition upon the earth and preparation for eternity, depends in no small degree on the diffusion and inculcation of this volume among all the tribes of men throughout the habitable globe. This is the great and exclusive object for which, in the last generation, this Society was instituted. The whole book had then existed upward of eighteen hundred years, and wherever it had penetrated and been received,

it had purified and exalted the character of man. Reposing upon three fundamental pillars—the Unity and Omnipotence of God, the Governor of all the worlds—the immortality of the human soul, and its responsibility to that Creator in a future state—and a system of morals embracing in one precept the whole duty of man upon the earth—'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself.'

"The Bible carries with it the history of the creation, the fall and the redemption of man, and discloses to him, in the infant born in Bethlehem, the Legislator and Saviour of the world. The faith in him and in his divine mission is inseparably connected with the performance of his will, and that will is all comprised in the song of the angel at his birth —'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good-will toward men.'

"In whatever region of the earth, in whatever condition of the human being, this blissful sound first salutes his ears, the depravities of his nature fall before it. The selfish and rancorous passions which had absorbed his soul and ruled his conduct under the impulses of hatred and revenge, sink with him into impotence. He bathes in the waters of Jordan, and rises cleansed from his leprosy, in the freshness and vigour of health, and the purity of benevolence and mercy.

"Such has been the progress of the Gospel wherever the Bible has been carried and suffered to be read. In the mysterious providence of God its influence has been counteracted by the spirit of evil, in all its thousand forms, throughout a long succession of ages. Its advancement has been slow; its victories desperately contested; its triumphs subject to cruel vicissitudes; its war against the world, the flesh, and the serpent, a perpetual, never-ceasing struggle. Yet its march has been uniform in purifying and ennobling the

moral intellectual and physical condition and character of man."

While turning the pages of the Congressional Globe for February, 1844, searching for some additional information concerning this Bible Convention in the House of Representatives, I came upon something which I count as one of the most fascinating discoveries I have ever made, personally, in the religious history of our great nation, if one may call it a discovery. I have never seen this referred to in any history of our Christian religion in the United States, nor in any volume dealing with the life of John Quincy Adams. To me, it forms one of the most remarkable episodes in the entire history of the United States Government in its relation to the Christian faith. Why it is never referred to in our American histories of the Constitution of the United States, I do not know.

Under date of Monday, February 19, 1844, the first business of the day in the House of Representatives was the following resolution presented by Mr. Adams himself:

"We, the undersigned, being of Western Pennsylvania and Ohio, and having with deep anxiety and painful emotions observed the distractions and alienations which are so alarmingly prevalent throughout the greater part of our beloved country—especially among the representatives of the peoples, who are so exceedingly broken in judgment that the affairs of the nation cannot be conducted so as to sustain its dignity and promote its best interests; and being fully convinced that the neglect to recognize the law of God as the basis of all human legislation, is the fontal source of these evils—the legitimate, yet bitter fruits, growing out of this radical defect in the instrument which lies at the foundation of this republic and is regarded as 'the supreme law of the lands,' and that God in His providence, is causing 'times to pass over us,' and to let this nation know 'that the Most High ruleth in the

kingdoms of men' (Daniel 6:25, 26) and 'that all people, nations and languages should serve him' (Daniel 14).

"We therefore pray you, as our representatives, to recommend to the people of these United States an alteration of the Constitution, embracing the following amendments:

1. A clear and explicit acknowledgment of the Sovereign of the universe, as the God of this nation.
2. An entire and avowed submission to the Lord Jesus Christ, His anointed (Psalm 2:7) who is Prince of the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5), the Head of all principalities and powers (Col. 2:10), as the ruler of His nation.
3. An unreserved reception of His revealed will, contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the law paramount, by which all the conflicting state laws being regarded as perfectly null and void. (Psalm 2:10, 12) 'Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings.' Also (Psalm 19:7; 11) 'The law of the Lord is perfect,' etc.

"We also most earnestly and solemnly entreat you, as you regard your own and the best interests of the nation, that you rescind at once, and forever, all enactments, whereby a violation of God's law is authorized; whether by running the mail stage on His Sabbath or otherwise; for 'righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people' (Prov. 14:34) see also Psalm 9:17, where the divine pleasure is expressed, and Psalm 9:17, where nations that forget God are devoted to destruction. Also Jeremiah 5:9, where God has pronounced His dread vengeance upon all the nations that do not serve and obey Him; and in Rev. 19:11, 21, the sentence is represented as being executed; the battle decision; the overthrow entire and complete.

"With these, and many other portions of infallible truth before us, and also a knowledge of the many and grievous sins with which this nation is chargeable in the sight of God—it is our deliberate judgment that nothing but national repentance and a thorough reformation in both Constitution

and administration will save this Republic from threatened and impending ruin.

"But the alienations, distractions, pecuniary embarrassments, and other abounding calamities, God in His Providence is saying, in the language of the Prophet Isaiah, 'Come now, and let us reason together . . . If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it' (chapter I, verses 18, 20).

"After it was read, Mr. Belser moved that it be not received. Upon this motion, Mr. Adams demanded the yeas and nays.

"Mr. Cave Johnson said he hoped the gentleman from Alabama would withdraw his motion and allow the petition to be received, and referred to the select committee to which were referred the resolutions of the Legislature of Massachusetts.

"Mr. E. J. Black observed that, if the gentleman from Alabama withdrew his motion he would renew it. That the select committee, he thought, had enough to do already. Mr. Cave Johnson then moved to lay the question of reception on the table.

"On seconding the demand for the yeas and nays, there were twenty-two votes in the affirmative and 109 in the negative. The demand for the yeas and nays not being seconded, Mr. Adams called for tellers.

"Upon seconding this demand, fourteen voted in the affirmative, which not being sufficient number, tellers were not ordered. The question being put, was carried in the affirmative, and the question of reception was accordingly laid upon the table."

While we are on this matter of the faith of Mr. Adams, I would like to present to you, if I may, just three or four paragraphs from some remarkable letters which John Quincy

Adams wrote to his son from St. Petersburg, beginning in September, 1811, and which appeared first in the columns of the New York *Tribune.* These letters were later published as *Letters to His Son on the Bible and Its Teachings,* a little book first appearing in Auburn, New York, in 1848, a volume of about 128 pages, and then frequently reprinted for the next three or four years.

"So great is my veneration for the Bible, and so strong my belief, that when duly read and meditated on, it is of all books in the world that which contributes most to make men good, wise, and happy—that the earlier my children begin to read it, the more steadily they pursue the practice of reading it throughout their lives, the more lively and confident will be my hopes that they will prove useful citizens to their country, respectable members of society, and a real blessing to their parents.

"I advise you, my son, in whatever you read, and most of all in reading the Bible, to remember that it is for the purpose of making you wiser and more virtuous. I have myself, for many years, made it a practice to read through the Bible once every year. I have always endeavored to read it with the same spirit and temper of mind which I now recommend to you: that is, with the intention and desire that it may contribute to my advancement in wisdom and virtue. My custom is to read four or five chapters every morning, immediately after rising from my bed. It employs about an hour of my time, and seems to me the most suitable manner of beginning the day. But, as other cares, duties and occupations engage the remainder of it, I have perhaps never a sufficient portion of my time in meditation upon which I have read. Every time I read the Book through, I understand some passages which I never understood before, and which I should have done, at a former reading, had it been effected with a sufficient degree of attention."

It has been stated, upon good authority, that Mr. Adams continued these faithful daily habits of reading the Bible throughout his life, even during his crowded days while living in Washington.

He brings to a close this particular series of letters to his son with this final exhortation and prayer: "To read the Bible is of itself a laudable occupation, and can scarcely fail of being a useful employment of time, but the habit of reflecting upon what you have read is equally essential as that of reading itself, to give it all the efficacy of which it is capable. I therefore recommend to you to set apart a small portion of every day to read one or more chapters of the Bible . . . As an expedient for fixing your attention, make it also a practice for some time to minute down in writing your reflections upon what you read from day to day; you may perhaps at first find this irksome, and your reflections scanty and unimportant, but they will soon become both easy and copious. And may the merciful Creator, who gave the Scriptures for our instruction, bless your study of them and make them to you 'fruitful of good works.' "

Recently I came upon a very interesting note about Adams' faithfulness at church attendance recorded in an old volume by Edward J. Gidding, called *American Christian Rulers,* in which appears the following communication from the Rev. Matthew Hale Smith:

"In the winter of 1845–46, I was invited to supply the pulpit of the Second Presbyterian Church of Washington City for a few months. Mr. Adams had been a member of this congregation for nearly a quarter of a century. He was an all-day hearer. The great snowstorm of February, 1846, which closed nearly all the churches in the county, did not keep Mr. Adams from the house of God. He was one of thirteen persons present, returning home in the deep snow on foot at the close of the service."

Adams from time to time indulged a desire to write poetry. I do not suppose he was ever called a great poet, but I do like his poem, "Lord of All Worlds," which will be found in a little book by Adams, called *Poems of Religion and Society* that was published in Auburn, New York, in 1850, after Adams' death. These are the two stanzas that most impressed me. I wish they could be hung up in the room of every college student in America today:

"The fool denies, the fool alone
Thy being, Lord, and boundless might;
Denies the firmament, Thy throne,
Denies the sun's meridian light;
Denies the fashion of his frame,
The voice he hears, the breath he draws;
O idiot atheist! to proclaim
Effects unnumbered without cause!

"Matter and mind, mysterious one,
Are man's for threescore years and ten;
Where, ere the thread of life spun?
Where, when reduced to dust again?
All-seeing God, the doubt suppress;
The doubt Thou only canst relieve;
My soul Thy Saviour-Son shall bless,
Fly to Thy Gospel, and believe."

Upon the death of Adams, the American Bible Society passed the following resolution at the beginning of its executive committee meeting on April 6, 1848:

"He was a diligent student of the Word of God. It was the delight of his great and discriminating mind to be daily refreshed at this fountain of Divine Wisdom; and it is our deliberate judgment that not only the stern integrity of his private life, but his widely extended influence, as a ruler and legislator, as advocate of human rights, and a patriot and philanthropist, is to be attributed to his long and intimate

familiarity with the eternal laws of truth, love, and righteousness which are revealed in the Holy Scriptures."

May I conclude this brief study of the religious faith and testimony of the sixth President of our nation with a remarkable paragraph with which one of our most distinguished contemporary historical writers, James Truslow Adams, begins a chapter in his fascinating book, *The Adams Family:* "John Quincy Adams believed profoundly in God. For him God was not a rarefied philosophical abstraction, a mere name for the Unknown, but a Being who ruled the universe. If His rule were not a beneficent one, all meaning would drop out of human existence and human morality. To deny that there was meaning to existence, and reality to moral belief and conduct, would be to commit intellectual and spiritual suicide.

"For Adams no amount of material comfort and well-being, either for the individual or the nation, could compensate for the void created by the denial of a God, and consequently of meaning in a moral universe. Adams also believed that man had been given mind, and its product, science, for the purpose of improving the condition of the race. He had also profoundly believed in his country."

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"*MODERN RATIONALISM* AS SEEN AT WORK IN ITS BIOGRAPHIES"

The caption we have chosen for this study is the title of a book published in London, England, in 1913 by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, one of the most remarkable volumes of its kind ever published in our language. I refer to the volume of 420 pages, published now nearly thirty years ago by Canon Henry Lewis, the rector and Rural Dean of Bermondsey, London.

First of all I would like to touch upon the particular copy I have in my library. In October, 1931, my beloved friend, Dr. Howard A. Kelly, the great Baltimore surgeon and devout Christian, came to Coatesville to speak at a banquet of my men's Bible class, and while looking through my library he picked out this volume and said it was a book he had never even heard of before and one which he would like to read. Well, of course, though I think more of some books than I do of my right arm, to this dear friend I could only pass the book on as a gift, quietly assuring myself that I would soon pick up another copy. To my amazement and consternation, after advertising all over the English world for a copy, I found that no bookstore had one for sale in any condition, new or old. Moreover, I have never found a copy of this volume in any of the great libraries of our country. It is not even in the Library of Congress in Washington, and in only one theological library with which I am acquainted. Some books I do not mind losing; a few I take pleasure in throwing in the waste basket myself; but that little open place

on my library shelf where Lewis' book once stood always gave me some pain. Some time later I heard that Dr. Kelly was disposing of his entire library and I wrote to ask him if his librarian could possibly look around and see if my Lewis volume was still there, for if so I would like to purchase it. My dear friend wrote back that he did not believe he ever had it, and, knowing the caliber of Dr. Kelly's mind, I just about came to the conclusion that my giving the volume to him in 1931 was a dream. But, two months later a letter came from this dear man, saying that the book had at last been found and was on its way back to my shelves without charge. So I am writing about a volume which you may never have seen, and may never hear about again, and yet I think after this discussion you will agree with me that it is one of the most valuable pieces of research in the field of apologetics that has been produced in the English language in the last half century. (Perhaps we should add, though it has nothing to do with this subject, that we were able to purchase from Dr. Kelly's library a complete set of the *Dictionary of National Biography* in 41 octavo volumes—the greatest addition to our own library which has been made for many years.)

Canon Lewis in this work examines the standard biographies and autobiographies of some of the leading rationalists and skeptics of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with a view to discovering, somewhat, the causes of their unbelief, the expressions of their skeptical views, and the consequences of such irreligiousness in their own personal lives. The first seven chapters are devoted, respectively, to a study of the following seven men: Voltaire; Thomas Paine; the philosopher, John Stuart Mill; the French rationalistic theologian, Renan; Charles Bradlaugh, the iconoclast; Herbert Spencer, the sociologist; and Nietzsche. In the two subsequent chapters he more briefly considers Goethe, Schopen-

hauer, George Sand, Shelley, Huxley, George Eliot, Sidgwick, and George John Romanes.

Nowhere in the book does Canon Lewis summarize the results of his investigation, and rather than considering the subjects he touches upon in the order in which they appear in his book, I thought I might arrange some of the data presented in these biographical studies under different subject headings, e.g., the skeptical influences surrounding these men in their youth, their confessed ignorance of Christian literature, their repudiation of moral standards, the pessimism that marked their lives, their final groping after some religious security, and other subjects that might suggest themselves as we proceed.

The Influence of an Environment of Irreligiousness Upon Outstanding Rationalists of Modern Times

The other day I was calling in an apartment building less than a mile northwest of the Moody Bible Institute, and rapped at the door of a basement apartment, to have the door opened by a man whom, I judge, was about 65 years of age, and to hear from his lips a most astonishing confession, though it was spoken in a very surly tone. I said to him, "I am a Christian minister. I just came to ask, Do you go anywhere to church?" In a very discourteous and grumbling way, he roughly replied, "No—I don't go anywhere to church! My parents taught me to have nothing to do with religion!" I found out that this man's father had once been a Lutheran pastor in Norway, but had abandoned the Christian faith and had drilled into his children a veritable disgust for the church and its teachings. And this man, now 65 years of age, could not remember that he had ever once been inside of a church for divine service! The skepticism of the father was stamped, indeed, on the soul of this son. So, in Lewis' book, we read, e.g., that when Voltaire was no more than three

years old his godfather and first instructor, a certain Abbé Chateauneuf, taught the child a ribald deistical poem by the skeptic Rousseau, in which Moses was made to figure as an impostor, making even Voltaire's biographer to cry out, "What a strange picture it is! This child lisped scoffings as other children lisp prayers."

While Tom Paine's mother was religious, a Quaker and a churchwoman, yet Paine remembered her as, "A woman of sour temper and an eccentric character," to whom he never made any affectionate allusion in his writings and, says Lewis, it "seems therefore to be one more in the list of famous Rationalists who never experienced the spell of charming motherhood."

John Stuart Mill, the great philosopher, said in his own autobiography that in addition to being deliberately deprived by his father of the usual pleasures of childhood he "was brought up from the first without any religious belief."

In the home into which Charles Bradlaugh was born in 1833, all "the children were baptised, but beyond this conventional submission to its demands, Religion was not observed in the home."

The mother of George Sand—and if you do not know the life of this notorious character of literary fame and moral shame, you are not urged to investigate it—was a devout Catholic, but when she came to live in the home of the Comtesse de Horn, the grandmother of George Sand, who was a Deist and an admirer of Rousseau, the mother was overruled in the education of her child and submitted to seeing her educated on the principles laid down in Rousseau's *Emile*.

I wonder sometimes if Satan himself does not take early possession of the lives of people, for reasons we do not know. For instance, Tom Paine tells us that, when he was only eight years of age, upon hearing the doctrine of redemption set forth, perhaps in a crude way, as he was going down the gar-

den steps, he "revolted" at the recollection of what he had heard, and he adds, "I thought myself it was making God Almighty act like a passionate man that killed his son, when he could not avenge himself in any other way; and as I was sure that a man would be hanged that did such a thing, I could not see for what purpose they preached such sermons." Of course, our Lord's redeeming work is contrary to the flesh of man and the pride of man, and the church has always known enemies of the cross, but it is rather alarming to see such animosity manifest in the life of a boy only eight years old.

So Nietzsche himself confesses, in speaking of his picking up from a bookstall a copy of Schopenhauer's *"The World as Will and Idea,"* "I do not know what demon whispered to me: 'Go home and take that book with you.' "

Some Rationalists (not many), were originally intended for the ministry. John Stuart Mill, by the means of an ordination fund, was actually sent to Edinburgh to study at the University in preparation for the Presbyterian ministry, and was even licensed as a preacher, when he discovered, so he says, that he could not believe in the Christian religion.

George Sand, at 14 years of age, was placed in an aristocratic boarding school in Paris, served by the sisters of an English convent, and here coming under the powerful influence of the Catholic religion she decided to become a nun, upon hearing which her grandmother removed her from the school.

The General Ignorance of the Bible in the Lives of Outstanding Rationalists

It is often said in our Universities and in some groups of modern thought that Humes' famous essay on the miracles destroyed faith in the miracles for all subsequent time, which, of course, is by no means true, but you very seldom hear it

stated, yet it is fully authenticated as an acknowledged fact in Humes' life, that he never even read the New Testament through once during his whole career, and, strange to say, while he talks a great deal in his essay about some of the foolish, unbelievable so-called miracles of the saints of the medieval days, he never once discusses any miracle performed by Christ, nor does he face the evidence for their reality.

So likewise Gamaliel Bradford, the famous American biographer who died a few years ago, confessed in one of his own books that there were two subjects he was actually afraid to investigate for fear that upon investigating them he might have to admit that they were true, and this would change his whole philosophy of life—namely, communism and the teachings of the New Testament. How tragic that a man who read all modern European languages and spent days and nights in laborious research should actually close his mind to the teachings of the greatest single volume that stood on the shelves of his great library, for fear that his whole life would be transformed.

Then, too, in this volume we find, for instance, John Stuart Mill saying as late as 1833 (when he was twenty-seven years old), in a letter to Carlyle, "I have been reading the New Testament. I can never be said to have read it before." His intimate friend and fellow Rationalist, Alexander Bayne, tells us that Mill "absented himself during his whole life, except as a mere child, from religious services. He scarcely ever read a theological book."

One needs only to read the writings of such men as Thomas Paine and Robert Ingersoll to know how really ignorant of the Word of God they were. And this led them, in the fullness of their ignorance, to make many nonsensical statements which any scholar today, however irreligious he might be, would refuse to subscribe to. For instance, take these words of Paine:

"As to the book called the Bible, it is blasphemy to call it the Book of God. It is a book of lies and contradictions, and a history of bad times and bad men. There are but few good characters in the whole book. The fable of Christ and his Apostles, which is but a parody on the sun and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, copied from the ancient religions of the Eastern world, is the least hurtful part. Everything told by Christ has reference to the sun."

The Repudiation of Moral Standards by Rationalists

It is not something to be surprised at that men without religion should in many cases (not all) be men at the same time without morals. In fact, I think it has been proved over and over again that many men do not choose to accept the Christian religion because they have already chosen to live in one way or another contrary to the great moral principles of mankind. This especially works out in two different spheres, that of dishonesty in money matters and coarse sensuality in the relationships that exist between men and women. Even Lord Morley, quite sympathetic to Voltaire, reports the following: "The proceedings (in the law courts) disclosed two facts of considerable seriousness for all who should have dealings with Voltaire; first, that he had interpolated matter to his own advantage in a document already signed by his adversary, thus making the Jew to have signed what he had not signed; and second, that when very hard pushed he would not swerve from a false oath, any more than his great enemy the Apostle Peter had done."

So Thomas Paine, in 1765, was found guilty of the offence of "stamping"; that is, he had officially passed stocks of excisable goods without "actually traveling to the trader's premises and examining specimens," for which he was dismissed from the office of excise man at Alford, England.

Again, in April, 1774, he was alleged to have had dealings in smuggled tobacco and was dismissed from office by the excise authorities because they said he was guilty "of having quitted his business without obtaining the board's leave for so doing and being gone off on account of the debts which he had contracted."

Of sins of a more sensual nature, the whole library of rationalistic biographies is full. Even Lord Morley, who wrote a more or less sympathetic life of Voltaire and who was himself a noted Rationalist, though a great scholar, is filled with abhorrence when he mentions a certain poem of Voltaire relating to Joan d'Arc which he says "not only abounds in immodesty and centers the whole action in an indecency of conception, but also fastens this gross chaplet around the memory of a great deliverer of the poet's own country."

I did not know until recently that Renan himself, whose beautiful style and picturesque pages have always fascinated lovers of literature even when they whole-heartedly repudiated his false reconstructions of New Testament history, wrote one drama in his later years, *The Abbess of Jouarre,* which was such an offence against public decency that even Matthew Arnold, Renan's fellow-Rationalist, could never forgive the outrage. And Renan, even when his own friends utterly repudiated the book, stoutly defended the horrible situation he had created. And I think Renan's statement found in his defense is something that perhaps we ought to recognize in this terrible day in which we live: "I often imagine that if mankind knew for certain that the world would come to an end in two or three days, love would break out on all sides with a sort of frenzy; for that which restrains love is the limit put upon it by the need of keeping society intact." So low had fallen the French savant who once attempted to tell the modern world something new about Jesus

of Nazareth! One thing that is very noticeable in the lives of most of these Rationalists is that they are extremely selfish, thinking for the most part of their own welfare, and never, never manifesting a real love and passion for the down-trodden, for the lost, the broken, the ruined, the ignorant and the poor, as much as they speak otherwise.

The Spirit of Pride

Closely related to the general principle of selfishness dominant in the lives of these men is a manifestation of pride of such a nature that at times one is almost tempted to laugh, it becomes so comical, or at least ludicrous. These men almost unanimously are found to have been swollen with an exaggerated conception of the importance of their literary works. Of course, Voltaire's lust for praise and his willingness to almost grovel in the dust to obtain the flattery of the great of his day, is too well known to even need comment.

Here we might recall what Bradlaugh said nearly a hundred years ago of his blasphemous book, *The Bible, What It Is,* published in 1857: "This work was intended to relieve the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge from the labor of re-translating the Bible, by proving that it is not worth the trouble and expense."

Well, I have spent some hours in investigating the publishing history of this work of Bradlaugh's in the 20th century and I discover the amazing fact that not one single edition of Bradlaugh's book has been published since 1905, whereas Great Britain has published since 1857 400 million Bibles, and the entire Bible has been translated into 320 new languages since Bradlaugh wrote this book to put an end, *he* thought, to the re-translating of the Bible.

Herbert Spencer in 1854, when preparing his *Psychology,* did not hesitate to write to his father concerning the work:— "My private opinion is that it will ultimately stand beside

Newton's *Principia.*" This was not a boy's dream, for Spencer then was thirty-four years of age.

Nietzsche, who of course, as we know, was always on the border of insanity and finally way over the border, wrote to his friend Rohde: "I need not hesitate to avow that in my opinion I have with this *Zarathustra* brought the German language to its pitch of perfection. After Luther and Goethe a third step remained to be taken—and consider, my old and dear comrade, were ever strength, subtlety and beauty of sound so linked in our language?"

Schopenhauer, in his later years, confided to one of his disciples that by his famous book, *The World as Will and Idea,* "he felt so convinced of having solved the enigma of the world that he thought of having his signet ring carved with the image of the Sphinx throwing herself down the abyss."

The Inner Consequences of Rationalistic Convictions

We must consider for a moment some of the results of the irreligiousness of these noted skeptics in their own inner life. Did their repudiation of the Bible as the Word of God, did their denunciation of the church, did their denial of a personal God, did their scoffing at the redeeming work of Jesus Christ bring these men peace and joy and quietness of heart? Certainly, as we have already seen, their convictions did not result in honesty in a business way, or purity in personal life, or unselfishness in their relationship to mankind as a whole. Actually, these denials brought a sense of fear and a persistent pessimism which one finds constantly darkening the sky of this group of men who attempted to solve the riddle of life by leaving out the Center and Giver of life Himself.

Renan, toward the end of his life, cried out to his friend, Berthelot, "Vanity of vanities. Even art begins to seem rather empty. My impressions of twenty-five years ago have a touch of childishness in them. At the point of view that we have

attained no picture can teach us anything." Renan was then 55 years of age.

Herbert Spencer, late in life, confessed, "My own feeling regarding the ultimate mystery is such that of late years I cannot even try to think of infinite space without some feeling of terror, so that I habitually shun the thought." And at the end of his autobiography he makes the following confession: "Thus religious creeds which in one way or other occupy the sphere that rational interpretation seeks to occupy and fails, I have come to regard with a sympathy based on a community of need, feeling that dissent from them results from inability to accept the solutions offered, joined with the wish that solutions could be found."

I do not know of any sadder confession than that of Romanes in the midst of his period of agnosticism, before he came back to a living confidence in the Christian faith—these pathetic words which are no doubt known to many who read these pages: "It is with the utmost sorrow that I find myself compelled to accept the conclusions here worked out. I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness."

Let us take one more statement from the brilliant scholar, historical essayist and outstanding Rationalist of the latter part of the 19th century, Frederic Harrison, who ended his *Autobiographic Memories,* published in 1911, with the following statement:

"I close this book with words that indeed resume in themselves all that I have ever written or spoken during half a century, which is this—that all our mighty achievements are being hampered and often neutralised, all our difficulties are being doubled, and all our moral and social diseases are being aggravated by this supreme and dominant fact—that we have suffered our religion to slide from us, and that in effect our age has no abiding faith in any religion at all."

THE ULTIMATE INADEQUACY OF THE RATIONALISTIC POSITION

I was quite surprised in reading Lewis' work to discover that in many cases toward the end of life, these men who earlier were so pronounced in their denunciation of religious truth, as life drew to its close attempted to reach out and lay hold of something permanent and were compelled to acknowledge that many of their earlier conclusions were wrong and that after all a life of religious conviction could alone satisfy.

Thus, for instance, the great philosopher John Stuart Mill in 1863, at the age of 57, confessed in regard to miracles, "Unless I could pretend to know either that there is no supernatural power, or that such power never works but in one way, I cannot presume to say that Christ may not have worked miracles; and I confess that if I could be convinced that he ever *said* he had done so, it would weigh a great deal with me in favour of the belief." Five years later he wrote to a friend, "I look upon ancient Christian teaching as the highest the world has yet known, and shall regard it as a misfortune indeed if this noble spirit were to die out with the prejudices which have overlaid it. But I do not believe it will." I hope my readers will permit me to quote once more from Mill in his acknowledged confession concerning the supremacy of the Lord Jesus. "About the life and sayings of Jesus Christ there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with profundity of insight, which, if we abandon the idle expectation of finding scientific precision where something very different was aimed at, must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitch-

ing on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity. Nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rules of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life."

I have not had the opportunity to look into this matter with great care, but Lewis calls our attention to the astonishing fact that the late Dr. Moule, Bishop of Durham, one of the great scholars and saints of the Church of England of the last generation, declared that he had heard from private and good authority that John Stuart Mill had died a Christian. Perhaps some time we can come back to this subject.

Herbert Spencer, at the age of 76, wrote to a correspondent, "I have myself sometimes had promptings to believe in a supernatural agency, caused by the repeated experiences of coincidences in various ways injurious. . . . And simple induction would, I think, almost have led me to believe in supernatural agency, were it not that with me the conviction of natural causation is so strong that it is impossible to think away from it."

Even Nietzsche, probably the most violent, satanically possessed enemy of Christianity of the 19th century, wrote to his friend Peter Gast in 1887, two years before his lapse into madness, "Whatever I may happen to say of Christianity I cannot forget that I owe to it the best experiences of my spiritual life; and I hope never to be ungrateful to it at the bottom of my heart." Later he wrote to another old friend, "Almost all I have written should be erased." These are sad words, but after we have written it is too late to wish we had not written. More than one enemy of Christianity has come to the end of life wishing that he had not written the books which, coming from his pen, destroyed the faith, and hope, and joy of thousands of those who read and believed him.

Huxley, very late in life, wrote to his fellow Rationalist,

John Morley, "It is a curious thing that I find my dislike to the thought of extinction increasing as I get older and nearer the goal. It flashes upon me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of what is going on than I did in 1800. I had sooner be in hell a great deal—at any rate in one of the upper circles, where the climate and company are not too trying. I wonder if you are plagued in the same way."

How different is the conclusion of a life, for instance, such as that of the Apostle Paul, who, not dying in comfort nor with the praise of the world sounding in his ears, but languishing in the prison at Rome, about to be taken out and executed under Nero, could cry out, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

I would like to end this discussion of Lewis' book with his account of a very strange meeting held at Oxford in 1890, concerning which some day I would like to know more. I have never seen this referred to with detail in any other place. The following is entirely from Lewis:

"In 1890 a small society at Oxford had included in its programme for discussion what Dr. Arnold once called 'the best authorised fact in history'—the Resurrection. In order that the non-Christian side of the subject might be stated, Spencer was asked to 'put down the main reasons for honestly doubting the fact.' He wrote saying that 'though it is out of the question for me to furnish you with direct reasons for doubt, I can furnish you with some indirect reasons of a sufficiently weighty kind. I can give you from my own experience four instances which have occurred during the last twenty years,

showing the extreme untrustworthiness of human testimony.' These were 'that he was present at the funeral of Mr. Odger, at the unveiling of the memorial statue to Mr. Fawcett, at the funeral of Lord and Lady Dalhousie, and that he had written articles on Sociology for the Birmingham Pilot.' 'Here (continued Spencer) are the testimonies of eye-witnesses ordinarily to be regarded as conclusive evidence. And all this occurred within a period covering but a fourth part of my life, and in an age of the world when men are more critical and less credulous than they were two thousand years ago. As there is no reason for supposing that my experiences of the invalidity of testimony are peculiar, it is manifest that there must be multitudinous cases daily occurring of apparent clear proofs, which are not proofs. If so, what are the probabilities respecting the testimony on which you rely for believing in these alleged breaches of the order of Nature?'

"It is not recorded what the Dons of Oxford thought of Spencer's reply. That he could seriously put forward such instances as really parallel with the case of the Resurrection is astonishing. That he could also omit to make reference to the tremendous difference between the testings, which the two compared classes of cases had received, leads us to suspect that there were other and more important occasions of controversy when his discriminating faculties were not put into strictly judicial use."

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SOME BOOKS THAT NEED TO BE WRITTEN, EDITED OR TRANSLATED FOR BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS

I. Bibliographical Works

Space forbidding any introductory matter, let me enter at once upon this subject, recognizing, of course, that what any man might say on a topic like this will be, in part, dominated by his own special fields of investigation, and his own personal needs and desires; though I trust much that is here mentioned will meet with cordial approval in the minds of a host of others. I have a personal letter in my file from the late Professor David F. Schaff, dated November 25, 1933, from which a short paragraph may be quoted as an initial suggestion. "What the English-speaking Protestant world, so it seems to me, most needs today is a thorough encyclopedia, written under Protestant auspices, corresponding to the very valuable *Catholic Encyclopedia,* and doing for this generation what the *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* was intended to do when it appeared about 1885. Such a work would cost scores of thousands of dollars. It has been proposed, but no publisher has been found thus far to undertake the work of such a publication."

A volume that would prove a great boon to New Testament students would be a *bibliographical* encyclopedia of the Gospels. If it proved successful, the idea could be carried out in an additional work, a bibliographical encyclopedia of the Acts and the New Testament epistles. Such a volume should have comprehensive lists of *all* the important works pertaining to the Lord Jesus Christ, and every aspect

of Christ's life on earth, exhaustive bibliographies for every character appearing in the Gospels, every place mentioned, the Gospels themselves, and the doctrines set forth in these precious writings. One might also say that such a work would contain references to all the principal books, articles, and essays, in the important European languages and our own, for every subject mentioned, e.g., in Hastings' magnificent *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels.* A beginning was made for English titles alone, when Dr. Ayres published his bibliography of five thousand titles, *Jesus Christ our Lord,* in 1906. However, in these forty odd years a vast new literature has arisen, and Ayres gave no attention to continental works. It seems to me that if such an encyclopedia were rightly done, it might also contain references to the more important sermonic literature.

Of course, we need a dictionary of all writers on theological and Biblical subjects down through the ages, but this is just a dream, and I only mention it. Everyone knows of what value it would be if done, e.g., on the scale of Richardson's amazingly exhaustive bibliographical volume in the Ante-Nicene Fathers' series. We are likewise in great need today of a guide to the literature of the history of Christianity and the church. The one edited by Samuel Jackson Case in 1931 is wholly inadequate and in many places disappointing. When Beers published his *Bibliographies in American History* (1938) he listed approximately 7700 items, but Case, with fewer bibliographical details, for the 1900 years of church history listed only 2512 items. Someone should revise and bring up to date the very valuable *Literature of Theology* by the late Bishop Hurst (1895).

I think thousands of ministers would be eager to purchase a volume that thoroughly indexed the principal sermonic literature of Great Britain and our own country, since 1890, say, in which would be included references, by text, and often

by subject, to all the sermons of such men as John Henry Jowett, J. D. Jones, George H. Morrison, H. C. G. Moule, G. Campbell Morgan, Alexander Whyte, Boreham, Clow, etc. I am not a man who favors crutches, and I have always looked upon them with disgust, but it would not mean, I think, a weakening of the homiletic mentality of our ministers, if the actual *subjects* of a great number of these sermons on certain texts were given when truly suggestive. For instance, Jowett calls his sermon on the phrase, "slow of heart to believe" (Luke 24:25) "Dull Scholars"; his sermon on Luke 5:5 is entitled "The Old Tackle and the New Presence"; Dr. Charles Brown calls his, "After Failing, Try Again." One could go on *ad infinitum*. Such a volume would mean that a minister would have on his desk an index to all the *important* sermonic literature published in the last fifty or sixty years found in his own library, or in any library in which he might be working.

What a great asset a new encyclopedia on Missions would prove to be! If it is ever undertaken, it should include full bibliographies of the writings of all missionaries mentioned and all books and articles written about them. This has been a tragically neglected field; e.g., of the 27 men and women mentioned in the *American Missionary Memorial Including Biographical and Historical Sketches* (edited by H. W. Pierson and published by Harpers in 1853) only five can be found in the *Dictionary of American Biography*. To my astonishment—unless I have become incapable of reading an index—one of the greatest missionaries of all time, whose work and prayers drew off from the island of Britain throughout his lifetime more than one thousand men and women for China, is not even mentioned in the *Dictionary of National Biography*—I refer to no less a person than J. Hudson Taylor! (Incidentally, though obscure trappers, many unimportant and comparatively unknown politicians, and long-forgotten

actors, etc., are frequently given place in the *Dictionary of American Biography,* neither Dr. Reuben Torrey, nor Dr. C. I. Scofield, has any place in these twenty-one volumes, though their writings are still being read by hundreds of thousands of men and women in this country!) Speaking of missions, a two-volume work on the history of Protestant missions in Palestine is now overdue.

Finally, in the area of bibliography, can not the librarians of our theological seminaries unite in a much-needed (but expensive) project—an index to the principal Biblical and theological journals of Great Britain and our own country? How far back this bibliography should go, I do not know. If one just brought together the material found in the already separately-printed indexes to various periodicals, it would be a boon, e.g., the cumulative indexes of the *American Journal of Theology, Bibliotheca Sacra, The Expositor, The Expository Times, The Hibbert Journal, The Journal of Biblical Literature,* the *Journal of Theological Studies, The Moslem World,* and the *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly,* to mention only a few. Such periodicals as the *Record of Christian Work,* and the *Biblical Review,* now no longer existing, never issued indexes, I think, but they contained valuable material. If properly done, it should begin not later than 1800. There are magnificent articles of real scholarship and insight on eschatological matters, for instance, in prophetic journals published in London in the 1830's and 1840's, that are buried, but ought to be made available for students. I have before me the remarkable analytical index to the first twenty-one volumes of the *Lutheran Church Quarterly,* which alone contains references to material which I am afraid most of us never saw when it was originally issued. In just turning the pages I came upon the name of an article which, it seems to me, should be very important in the light of contemporary events, *The White House and the Vatican,* by J. C. Mattes,

which was given sixteen pages of space in this quarterly in 1928. I myself have for years been interested in the various subjects pertaining to the inexhaustible themes of eschatology. Here I find scores and scores of articles of great importance which I have never even seen referred to elsewhere in our contemporary literature, even including articles on "Luther's Longing at the Close of His Life for the Judgment Day," "Belief in the Imminence of the Second Coming in Germany after World War I," "Luther's Estimate of the Revelation of John and His Reticence Concerning It," etc., etc. There is an excellent *Catholic Periodical Index*—a Protestant one should have been begun years ago.

II. Theology

I suppose all who believe in the Bible as God's supreme revelation, and whose faith in Christ rests upon that revelation, and all those who are serious students, and sensitive to the age in which we live, would probably agree that the one greatest need in the Christian church today is for a comprehensive work covering the entire field of systematic theology, written by a man who is at home in the Biblical languages, and in philosophy, and who, in his soul knows something of the profound, revolutionary, and eternal work accomplished for us in Jesus Christ, God's Son, and who is saturated with a knowledge of the Word of God. He should also know something, of course, of modern science. Perhaps today one man will never write again a theology as comprehensive as Hodge or Shedd, or Strong. I think, however, I know two men, very good friends, who together in the next fifteen years, if that length of time is given to them of God, could do just this kind of work. Dorner, at the beginning of his *System of Christian Doctrine,* well said: "This problem, to mentally master Christian truth as truth—that is, to apprehend the same both according to its inner coherence and its foundation—must

be regarded as a standing problem for the church, which has to consciously and experimentally propagate the contents of Christian faith as *truth.* No age can undertake the task for another age; each must perform the work anew for itself, however valuable may be the aid of the past, and however assured the continuity which exists. Every age must again acquire the certainty of truth as truth, if it would have truth; it must also, as a consequence, acquire in ways satisfactory to its own sense of truth." I find myself without adequate words for expressing the need of such a work as this. The tragedy is we have so few real theologians in North America today. Speaking of theological works, why does not someone undertake a history of theology in our own country from the days of the Pilgrim fathers down to the present hour, something with the same scope as Herbert W. Schneider's *History of American Philosophy,* or the earlier work by Anderson and Fisch, *Philosophy in America from the Puritans to James, with Representative Selections,* 1939, with a rich bibliographical apparatus?

III. Apologetics

When Professor John Cairns delivered his Cunningham Lectures in 1880, he began with these words: "The subject which I have chosen for these lectures is a part of the great history of the conflict between Christianity and Unbelief. That history is, to a large extent, still unwritten, and though some periods have received comparatively full treatment, others lie in shadows, while inferences and generalizations on the whole are scanty and defective." A work of this type is more needed today than ever. It should be on the scale of J. M. Robertson's four-volume work, *A Short History of Free Thought* and *A History of Free Thought in the Nineteenth Century.* I think, if rightly done, it *ought* to begin with the skeptical tendencies arising in pre-Christian Greek philoso-

phy. We are now engaged in the greatest struggle for faith in a sovereign God, and a supernatural Christ, that the western world has known since the advent of the Saviour. Materialism and humanism are creating the atmosphere and intellectual mood of our day. Such a work as this would put iron into the souls of many. We are in great need today of an adequate volume on theism for use as a textbook in our colleges and theological seminaries. Every professor I know in this country teaching in a college or seminary would agree to this. We also need now a more comprehensive work on the whole subject of Christian apologetics than is now available, something on the order of the great volume which Canon Harris issued some years ago, *Pro Fide,* something that will grapple with the problems introduced by science, by the whole Barthian approach to the matter of revelation and handle the *major* critical problems relating to the Biblical text as a whole.

IV. Biographical Works

I do not think there is a volume in the English language of standard character on the great missionary Zinzendorf. Someone should work in the rich treasures of British church history of that age, and give us an adequate life of Matthew Henry. Why biographies of Dr. Warfield and Dr. Strong, on the plane of the great biographies of Schaff and Hodge, have not been written, I do not know. The life of Alfred Edersheim would be fascinating if adequately written. Is there someone working in England today on the life and writings of Sir William Mitchell Ramsay?

Mr. Alexander Gammie, in his recent and very interesting volume, *Preachers I Have Heard,* has well said, "It has always seemed a pity that we have had no biography of Professor Stalker, who was so much of a personality and whose gifts were so distinctive. He filled a large place in the religious

life of this country and was more widely known in America than any other Scottish preacher of his day."

V. Biblical Interpretation and Christology

Here the field is enormous, and everyone working in Biblical literature will have his own idea of what is most needed at this time. Years ago (in 1911) the late Professor Votaw gave it as his opinion that "Paul's Epistles to Timothy and Titus still await an adequate commentary in English." This is still true. The new work by Burton Scott Easton does not fulfill this need. How we need a new exhaustive work on the book of Job in the light of modern science! Significantly toward the end of the fourth volume of his *Words of the Lord Jesus,* Rudolf Stier said, "O that the Lord would give me time and strength before I go to my grave to express my living apprehension of the meaning of this book of Job! But this I must leave to others." One of the outstanding younger Semitic scholars told me only recently that it is the growing opinion among authorities in this field that Job may well have been, as the earlier expositors thought, of the patriarchal days, and our new knowledge of the languages of peoples contiguous with ancient Israel should now throw additional light on this book.

I wish someone would give us a work on the names and titles of the Lord Jesus Christ, with both scholarship and devotion to Christ, since the greatest work on this subject was published over a century ago, the *Horae Solitariae* of Ambrose Serle. Of course, Serle's work is not to be compared to such a volume as Dr. Warfield's *The Lord of Glory,* which could be used as a foundation for such a study; but many titles of Christ are not to be found in Warfield's work, nor is there much of devotional value there. We still need an adequate work surveying the material on the very important subject of the Biblical teachings on heaven. Much of the

literature is superficial, and in part fantastic. Why has not someone given us a sound work on the doctrine of *goodness* in the New Testament? Would not great multitudes of ministers, and laymen, too, welcome today a volume on a subject that many talk about, but no one writes about, the *great revivals of the Bible?* There are scores and scores of works on the revivals of the last three or four centuries, but nothing worth looking at on the revivals that are recorded in the Word of God.

Incidentally, does anyone know of a work that fully treats the subject of the influence of the Bible on German life and literature? I remember checking on this in the great Imperial Library in Berlin in 1937, and two attendants, a man and a woman, became quite excited when I even asked about it, and after searching in vain their huge folio catalogs, they shook their heads and told me there was nothing. Can this be true? (I would like someone to tell me the real significance of the ringing of those bells on Easter morning, and the hymn of the angels, "Christ is Risen," at the beginning of the second part of Goethe's *Faust.*)

VI. Biblical Eschatology

I do not know of any field outside of the subject of systematic theology (and it may be even that is not to be excluded), in which we need a standard work so much as we do in the field of Biblical eschatology, covering everything from the Protevangelium at the beginning of our Bible down to the last prayer of the book of Revelation. People today are confused in their prophetic convictions. Some are giving up their formerly held faith in certain prophetic truths. There is a vast literature arising in Switzerland, France, and Holland, as well as in Great Britain and our own country, which contains so many contradictory interpretations. I have five books here in my office on the book of Daniel alone which

have been issued in the last fifteen months, and the material in some of them is quite startling. I do not see how anyone can claim to speak authoritatively on this particular book of Daniel, for instance, until he has thoroughly sifted the material in the new volume, *Studies in Daniel,* by Professor H. L. Ginsberg of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. There is a great deal being said today, for example, about Gog and Magog, but I have seen no one even hint that he knows of the existence of the late Professor Arthur Anderson's work of ripest scholarship, *Alexander's Gate: Gog and Magog and the Enclosed Nations,* published by the Medieval Academy of America (1932). I could go on in this subject indefinitely, but refrain from doing so. But at a time when the words "eschatology" and "apocalyptic" are to be found on almost every other page of theological and Biblical literature, it is to be deeply regretted we do not have a standard work on this great and increasingly important subject. When economists and scientists, statesmen and philosophers, are telling us that we are at the end of this age, with only a few more years to work, so they say, it behooves us to have a clear conception of what the Word of God has to say about the end of the age. I know many whose minds are ripe for such a work.

VII. Lives of Christ

In the literature of the 20th century, one is probably underestimating rather than exaggerating in making the statement that since 1900 there have been not less than 4,000 titles published in the English language directly relating to the person, work, and influence of the Lord Jesus Christ; and yet I believe one can say that in that period only one truly outstanding work has originated in Protestant circles either in America or in Great Britain attempting to present fully the entire life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth. (I

am not here including important volumes originating in France, e.g., Borchert's *The Original Jesus.*) It was forty-five years ago that the first edition of the late Professor David Smith's *In the Days of His Flesh* appeared. In the latter part of the 19th century we had three great works on Christ, each in two massive volumes—the works by Edersheim, Geikie and Farrar. No work has appeared of such comprehensiveness and influence, even including David Smith's volume, for the last sixty years. With all the vast amount of literature that has appeared since that time concerning the Gospels, and such subjects as the eschatology of Jesus, His parables, the title "the Son of Man," and His deity, such a work is long overdue; and I believe if it were rightly done, written with some brilliance, resting on sound scholarship, it would have a phenomenal sale and influence. Of course, nothing has ever appeared *originally* in England, or in this country, comparable to the great four-volume life of Christ published by the distinguished theologian and exegete John Peter Lange, three-quarters of a century ago, and subsequently translated by Marcus Dods. I am not saying there have not been some great works about Christ, but there has not been in the last forty-five years an epochal work that can be referred to with authority, and read with joy, attempting to cover every important aspect of our Lord's incarnate life.

This reminds me of something else—and I would be glad to hear from any person who would like to send in a communication on this—why is it that in our own country we have not had a great life of Christ (probably a number of liberals would here disagree with me) for nearly ninety years? —not since Samuel J. Andrews gave us in its first edition (1862) his truly epochal *The Life of Our Lord Upon Earth,* a work which Marcus Dods himself said, "is indispensable to anyone who intends a thorough study of the subject but yet has not access to the authorities themselves or has not leisure

to use them. The accuracy of his references and impartiality of his citations, as well as the fairness and candor of his own judgments inspire us with confidence in the author." Stevens and Burton in their *Harmony of the Gospels* years later said this was "a work into which has gone a lifetime of scholarly research and to which all students of the life of Christ are under large obligation." Why is it that not for ninety years has anything appeared in this country of equal importance on the life of our Lord?

VIII. Miscellaneous

Let me mention just briefly other volumes that might prove helpful to that great group of men and women, serious students of the Word of God. Some young man, with adequate equipment, should begin to work on an exhaustive treatment of the eighth chapter of the book of Romans, in some ways the greatest chapter in the Word of God. I believe now and then this chapter has been assigned for a thesis, looking forward to a master's degree in some of our better theological seminaries, but I know of no work that has ever been published from such investigation.

A very interesting volume, and one I think which might make some money for a publisher—if one can be forgiven for mentioning such a thing as profit from a book—is a geographical arrangement of the Scriptures, that is, such of the Scriptures as involve geographical matters. Of course, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, most of the book of Leviticus and many of Paul's epistles are not related to geographical matters. If one wished to, he could confine himself to Palestine and Syria, but I have often wondered why some publisher interested in guide books, like the house of Murray, has not undertaken the publication of a book arranging all relevant geographical material under various rivers, cities, lakes, mountains, so that pilgrims going to

Palestine, e.g., could instantly turn to all the more important passages in the Scriptures relating, say, to Tyre, or Sidon, to the Sea of Galilee, or to Jericho, etc. Along this line, a volume of fascinating interest could be formed by bringing together some of the great classic passages that have been written regarding the Holy Land, a sort of anthology of Palestine, both prose and poetry.

Finally, we still need a great volume on what the Bible says about itself. My own idea here would be not a volume of profound scholarship, but a devotional volume, taking up say four hundred different statements in the Scriptures concerning the Word. A young man beginning his ministry could devote many of his morning hours of meditation to this theme, beginning with the very first chapter of Genesis. We talk so much about what the Bible says about its own inspiration, but few have really worked in this rich gold mine.

And speaking of the Word of God, I know of no book in our language, or in any other language, nor have I seen a reference to one in any other language, which gathers together with thoroughness and adequately, with real historical insight, the great tributes that have been given to the Word of God, from the time of the apostolic fathers down to today. One might call it, The Witness of the Ages to the Word of God, and I am more convinced these days than ever that the Christian church today needs a new work, profound, abreast of the best scholarship, dealing with the perennial and preeminently important question of the inspiration of the Word of God.

IX. Works for Translation

This discussion is already too long, but I can't help bringing it to a close by just hinting at some of the important items that scholars *could* bring out in English translations. For some strange reason, Jerome's important commentary on

Daniel has never been translated into English. Immanuel Kant called Christian August Crusius "the clearest philosopher and second to none in the promotion of philosophy in our age" (for forty years Professor of Theology in Leipsic) but his *De coelo per Adventum Christi commoto* (1757), has never been translated and is so rare that few, I think, in America have ever seen it. John Owen, the greatest scholar among Puritan divines, wrote a work in 1661, *Theologumena Pantodapa,* called "an encyclopedic treatise on the history of religion and theology, natural and revealed, from the Creation to the Reformation," which ought to be available in the English language. Many of the commentaries by Zahn certainly should be made available to English readers, for some of them are unquestionably among the very best of modern times. Klausner (of Jerusalem) wrote some years ago an exhaustive work in Hebrew on the Messianic Hope of Israel that someone should translate for the Christian world. I suppose editing earlier books is a rather dry and tedious affair, but I would certainly like to see someone give us a thoroughly edited edition of Increase Mather's *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation* (which I think was never reprinted after its appearance in London in 1669, an original copy of which I am proud to possess). If the editor would just give us notes on the two hundred different authors from whom Mather quotes, the writings of some of which I believe are wholly lost, he would give us a work eminently worthwhile.

No man living in Christendom today could himself even think of writing the last work I am going to mention, but surely a group of scholars could collaborate and give us what I think has never been adequately done in any language, a comprehensive, sympathetic, fully annotated history of Christian and Biblical literature from the days of the apostolic fathers down to our generation. It is now over a century and a quarter ago that such a work was attempted in our own

language, and nothing comparable to it has since been done, though sections of this literature (geographical or chronological) have been written. I refer to a work which at that time met with widespread approval, *Illustrations of Biblical Literature, Exhibiting the History and Fate of the Sacred Writings from the Earliest Period to the Present Century; Including Biographical Notices of Translators and Other Eminent Biblical Scholars,* by James Townley, originally published in 1821 and republished in this country in two large volumes in 1842.

In his dedicatory epistle, prefacing his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans,* John Calvin wrote in 1539, "Nothing has been done by men so absolutely perfect that there is no room left for the hands of those who succeed them either to polish, or to adorn, or to illustrate."

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